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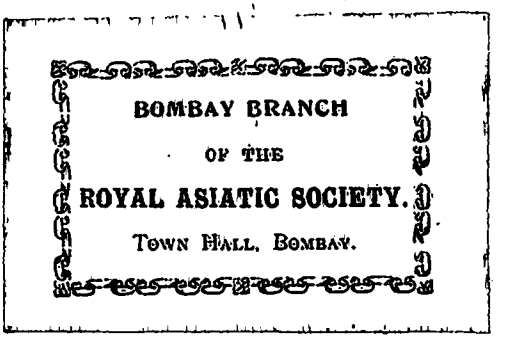

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RAMBLES IN YUCATAN

INCLUDING

A VISIT TO THE REMARKABLE RUINS

OF

CHI-CHEN, KABAH, ZAYI, UXMAL &c.

SISAL.

BY B.M. NORMAN.

NEW-YORK,

J. & H.G. LANGLEY, 57 CHATHAM STREET.

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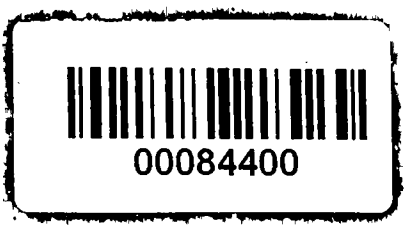

RAMBLES IN YUCATAN;

OR,

NOTES OF TRAVEL THROUGH THE PENINSULA,

INCLUDING

A VISIT TO THE REMARKABLE RUINS

OF

CHI-CHEN, KABAH, ZAYI, AND UXMAL.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY B. M. NORMAN.

SECOND EDITION.

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PREFACE.

To those who intend to bestow upon the following pages the honor of a perusal, it may seem almost supererogatory for the author to mention, that it has formed no part of his purpose to prepare a book which should owe its leading interest to its literary merits. His life has been necessarily more devoted to the dissemination of books than to the study of their internal fabrication; he has had but slender opportunities for the cultivation of letters, and little of the preparation requisite for a task, to the results of which he now solicits the candid consideration of the public.

Circumstances, however, of which all that is worthy of detail will be found in the following pages, brought under the author's observation a portion of our continent which was strewed with gigantic and monumental ruins of ancient cities, and which, to the several departments of Cosmogony, Archæology, and Ethnography, appeared in his eyes to be of vast importance. Impressed with this conviction, although the author left his country without the remotest intention of making a book upon any subject whatever, or even of seeing the wonderful places he has attempted to describe, yet, with very inadequate scientific qualifications — without instruments, except a knife and compass, and without a companion, save an Indian boy — entirely ignorant of the country and its people — he was enabled to explore many objects of interest and curiosity; and he has resolved to present the substance of his observations and researches, in as succinct a manner as possible, that those who are competent to avail themselves of his labors may digest and present them to the public in such a form as will most contribute to the advancement of true science.

It is, therefore, to the facts which it has been the author's privilege to witness and reveal, and not to the garniture of those facts, that he looks, for the interest which he desires to awaken in the minds of his readers, and upon which he relies for his own justification in having for once trespassed *ultra crepidam* into the charmed circle of literary enterprise. The almost universal curiosity which has manifested itself in every quarter through which public feeling has utterance, concerning the vast and unexplained ruins of our hemisphere, found in Central America and Yucatan, has not been, in modern times at least, excelled by that upon any subject not involving some immediate and practical interest, not even excepting the discoveries of modern antiquarians in Egypt. It is neither the author's duty nor purpose to analyze this movement, or to discern its cause; it only concerns him to show that he had good reason for presuming that further developments of, and explorations among these mysterious relics of antiquity, could not fail to awaken some portion of that interest which the public mind, in this country at least, has already manifested.

A portion of the ruins which are noticed in detail in the following pages had never been visited, to the author's knowledge, by any modern traveller before his arrival. Others, which had been summarily alluded to, he has portrayed as elaborately and adequately as his circumstances and scientific qualifications would admit; and, he has no hesitation in saying, far more minutely than they had ever before been described. In corroboration of these remarks, he ventures to call the reader's attention to the chapters which include the ruins of Chi-Chen, of Kabah, Zayi, and Uxmal, of which cities, the last only excepted—to which Mr. Stephens devotes a few sentences near the conclusion of his recent popular work upon this subject—no other published accounts, it is believed, have appeared.

The author avails himself of the present opportunity to make those acknowledgments to the people of Yucatan which could not be incorporated with propriety in the body of his work. He feels himself under grateful obligations for the uniform kindness which he received at their hands; and he begs to assure those of his American friends who may feel disposed to visit the

province of Yucatan, that whatever inconveniences they may experience indirectly from an unfavorable climate and an unsettled political organization, they may count upon meeting, among the higher ranks of the Yucatecos, a kindliness of feeling and a spontaneity of hospitality which will compare favorably with their experience in any other portion of the globe.

In acknowledging his obligations to the friends who have assisted him in the preparation of these pages, he would be guilty of great injustice did he not tender his most sincere thanks to an American gentleman, who has long resided in Yucatan, to whom he is indebted for most of the facts connected with the political history of that country, which are embodied in the thirteenth chapter. The long residence of that gentleman in the country, and his evident familiarity with its political history, give the author reason to rely implicitly upon his acquaintance with the subject, as well as upon his fidelity as an historian.

The author regrets that he is not permitted to give the name of the gentleman to whose aid he is indebted for the philological remarks contained in the fourteenth chapter, which he ventures to believe will prove to the scholar and the antiquarian not the least interesting feature of the work.

It has been the author's intention upon all occasions to acknowledge his indebtedness to any preceding or cotemporary writer in appropriate modes and places in the text, and he believes that he has seldom failed in his aim; at the same time, he feels that to Waldeck, a distinguished French traveller, who spent a number of years in Central America and Yucatan, his obligations are of a character not to be passed over without a special acknowledgment.

The illness of the writer during the time the following pages were passing through the press, must constitute his apology, should inaccuracies be found to disfigure the work.

The Map is intended to show the geographical position of the ruins, and of the towns passed through before arriving at them; and the Plans to define the relative locations of the structures, neither of them, however, is laid out with scientific exactness; it is hoped, nevertheless, they will still be found sufficiently correct to illustrate the descriptions.

If the public shall find the work now submitted to them possessed of sufficient merit to deserve their regard, or if others shall be induced, by reading it, to extend their researches in a similar direction, or shall, through its aid, eliminate one new ray of light to illumine the dark mystery of its subject, the author will feel amply compensated for the trouble he has taken, and will think himself entitled to indulge the assurance that his life has not been altogether without profit.

NEW ORLEANS, *November*, 1842.

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MAP
OF
YUCATAN
MEXICO.
Shewing the geographical position of the Ruins
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RAMBLES IN YUCATAN.

CHAPTER I.

Setting Out — Accommodations — Arrival at Sisal — Geographical and Political view of Yucatan — A Christening — Lady Smokers — Off for the Interior — Merida — A Feast-day — Christmas Eve — Christmas Day — Conclusion of a Feast — Holy Unction — Indian Character — Soldiers' Return — Holy Days — Gaming.

THE prospect of leaving one's country for a season, affects different people in very different ways. To some, it suggests only the loss of friends, and the want of the conveniences which habit may have made to them the necessaries of life. By their formidable equipments, their groaning trunks, and systematic leave-takings, they intimate a foregone conclusion, that every nation except their own is peopled with Ishmaelites, whose hands are ever raised against the rest of mankind. There is another class, who have faith in man wherever he exists, and who rely upon the permanence of the laws of Nature; who do not imagine that a man is necessarily a cannibal or a troglodyte because born in a different degree of latitude, nor that water will refuse to run down hill at a foreigner's request. Through their confidence in the uniformity of Nature's laws, they feel

it unnecessary to equip themselves for a campaign into chaos when they leave their native land, always presuming every corner of this planet, however remote from the illuminating centres of civilization, to be possessed of some of the elements of existence, such as air, fire, water, &c., which a traveller may spare himself the trouble of bringing from home in his trunk. With the latter class, kind reader, the author of the following notes deserves to be associated. He would require nothing but a valise to contain his outfit for a circumnavigation of the globe, and would include the moon in his circuit, if practicable, without materially enlarging his equipage, except, perhaps, by some device that would diminish the inconveniences of a rarefied atmosphere. This faith in the future, this trust in the resources which a mind of ordinary intelligence can always command under any sun and in any clime, sustained the writer in his determination, last fall, to visit some of the islands of the West India seas, almost without notice, and with scarcely more preparation than a domestic man would deem essential for an absence from home of a single week. The cork-legged merchant of Rotterdam did not commence his journeyings more unexpectedly to himself, nor less formidably panoplied against the emergencies of his unfortunate tour. To the writer's unpreparedness, a term which, in such cases, usually signifies freedom from anxiety, he feels indebted for most of the pleasure which this excursion has afforded him; and he has only cause to regret the want of more elaborate

preparation, inasmuch as it may have deprived these pages of a portion of their interest and value.

It was at the conclusion of the long and frightful season of epidemic disease, which caused many a desolated home in New Orleans to be hung with cypress during the summer of the year 1841, and on the 26th day of November, that I embarked from the Crescent city for Havana. My original intention had been, to visit the Windward Islands; but, not finding the facilities of intercommunication which I had anticipated, and excited by the curiosity of seeing a region of country of which but little is known to citizens of the United States, I was induced to change my contemplated route. Accordingly, after a detention of ten days in Cuba, where I had passed some of the happiest days of my youth, I resolved to embrace the first opportunity that presented itself to run down to the coast of Mexico. I was soon enabled to secure a passage on board of a Spanish brig bound to Sisal, of which I was prompt to avail myself.

Early on the morning of the 9th of December, we slipped by the Moro Castle with a fine breeze, and had but just effected a good offing when the vessel was suddenly hove to, much to our surprise and alarm, and without any apparent reason. Our alarms were soon dispelled, however, by the welcome intelligence, through the cabin-boy, that "breakfast was ready!" Our own countrymen are not indifferent to the "family comforts," and the English relish still less any interruption at their meals; but with the Span-

iard eating seems to have risen to the importance of a religious ceremony. Heaving to for breakfast, in a Yankee craft, would be looked at with astonishment by an American tar—we question if it would not cancel the ship's insurance policy. Every country, however, has its customs, and this is one peculiar to the flag under which we were now sailing. The meal happily ended, the yards were squared away, and the brig quietly pursued her course.

The cabin formed a part of the hold, without berths, bulk-heads, tables, or chairs. Planks were laid down for our accommodation, upon which our mattresses were distributed, the cargo forming sides, which, as the vessel rolled, served to retain us in our places. There were eight Mexican fellow-passengers, perfect out-and-outers in the way of eating, sleeping, and smoking, which they seemed to consider the ends for which they lived and moved and had their being. The captain proved to be a right good sailor, and his vessel, which was dignified by the name of a packet, shall be suffered to pass without censure, as deserving a better fate than awaited Sodom, in having at least one good man on board in the person of her excellent commander. After eleven days of continually pleasant weather we arrived in sight of the port of Sisal, on the north-west coast of Yucatan, on the 20th of the month; and, as the bills of lading might conscientiously have testified, "in good order and well-conditioned."

This coast presents a line of shore scarcely merging from the ocean, with no distinguishing highland

to conduct the mariner to his destined port. The unpretending little town to which our course was directed, at this time, however, very innocently on its own part, loomed up from the horizon to an immense height, and it was not until we had approached very near the land that our false impressions were corrected.

We came to anchor about two miles from the shore, that being as near as it was deemed prudent for vessels of our burden to venture. A felucca, manned by three Indians, now boarded us, for the purpose of receiving the passengers. The place of landing was a long pier-head, loosely put together, composed of spiles and plank, the only one in the harbor where the imports and exports are received and shipped. When once fairly on terra firma, we all started under the escort of our worthy captain for a public house, followed by a retinue of Indians, that gave us for a time at least the consequential appearance of Eastern nabobs. This numerous troop belonged professionally to the class which in our Northern cities besiege the wharves upon the arrival of a steamboat, as hackmen, porters, dock loafers, &c., but in justice to the Indians be it observed, that they are much less clamorous and more civil than their more pretentious brethren of the North.

Early on the morning of our arrival, our baggage was sent to the custom-house; but the politeness of the gentlemen attached to that establishment made the examination a matter of mere form. This civility is acknowledged with the greater pleasure, in con-

sequence of its having been accorded without solicitation, and contrary to our expectation.

With the permission of my reader I will here step aside, for one moment, from the detail of my ramblings, to say a single word about the geographical and political condition of the country in which I now found myself a denizen, pledging myself, however, to detain the narrative upon nothing which will not be pertinent to and explanatory of the subsequent pages.

The peninsula of Yucatan extends over a surface of some eighty thousand square miles, lying in a north-east direction from Laguna du Terminos, and jutting out north into the Gulf of Mexico, between the Bay of Campeachy and Honduras. It is about five hundred miles long, and one hundred and sixty broad, and is divided into five departments, eighteen districts, and containing two hundred and thirty-six towns. It is inhabited by something short of half a million of people, the majority of whom are Indians.

The country is almost one entire plain, half of which, to the north, consists of a light soil formed upon solid and broken masses of a white lime and flint rock. The other, the southern half, is a deep rich loam, but much affected by the heavy rains of summer, which present serious obstructions to the exertions of the agriculturist. There are no rivers in the interior. The inhabitants are supplied with water from sonatos, or natural wells, which are liberally distributed throughout the country by the formation of supposed subterraneous rivers.

Yucatan was formerly a part of the Mexican confederacy, but having recently declared her independence, she has her own President and Congress of legislators, elected by a limited class of qualified electors. Various attempts have been made, by menaces and by offers of negotiation on the part of the Mexicans, to reduce the refractory provincials to their allegiance, but hitherto without success. The deficiency of means, and the distracted condition of the Confederacy at home, have doubtless prevented the Mexicans from qualifying their diplomacy with physical force, which is probably the only kind of logic that will be conclusive.

Sisal, the place (as I have already mentioned) at which I disembarked, is situated upon the north-west side of the peninsula of Yucatan, and is the second port of the province. It presents an open roadstead, which, during the prevalence of the northerly winds, is considered very dangerous. The continuance of these storms frequently compels vessels to get under way and stand out to sea. The town has little of interest to strangers. Its population is about one thousand, consisting principally of Indians, and the residue are Mexicans. The houses are built of stone, are one story high, covering a large space of ground, with a court in the centre, embellished with trees and plants of the tropics. The roofs of the dwellings being thatched, give to the streets a somewhat singular aspect to strangers. The rooms of these buildings are large and airy, and their floors are formed of mortar and sand. Glass is not used; but

large openings are formed, protected by gratings and doors, which admit the necessary supply of light and air.

Near the beach is a small square fortification, rudely constructed and oddly enough garrisoned, if one may judge from the appearance of the soldiers upon guard. The Indians, who exclusively perform the menial services required throughout the country, seem to be happy and contented. Their wants are few and simple. The men wear loose white cotton trousers, extending a little below the knee, with a shirt of the same, or striped gingham, a palm-leaf hat and sandals. The women wear a simple loose dress hanging from the shoulders, loose about the neck, and falling negligently to the ankles. These garments are more or less ornamented with needle-work, according to the taste or the means of the wearer.

Although so near home, this scene was so entirely new to me, that I was exceedingly anxious to get a glimpse of the surrounding country. Unsuccessful, however, in finding an immediate conveyance to Merida, the capital of the province, we loitered about the town during the day, but could not discover any very especial signs of business. Every thing appeared to be dull and inanimate.

In the evening we were invited, through the politeness of the Collector of the Port, to attend the baptismal ceremony of his infant. The priest was early at his post, and the whole population of Indians was soon collected about the dwelling, and preparations were made for a grand procession to the church,

where the child was to be baptized. Every thing being in readiness, the whole mass started, led off by half-breed Indians and boys, making all kinds of discordant sounds, with drums, horns, and whistles; then the priest and the parents, with the child dressed out with flowers and ribands, and gold and silver ornaments; after these came the relations and friends, followed by the multitude. When they had arrived at the church, the performances were conducted in the usual Catholic style. The child appeared to be the only one who had any cause of complaint. The rough hands of the priest, and the continual pouring of cold water upon its delicate head, fully justified its boisterous protestations against such harsh treatment. Its restoration to the arms of its mother seemed to give great satisfaction to all parties present, except perhaps to the deaf and the blind.

The company now returned to the house. On the route, small pieces of silver coin were distributed among the Indians. The evening was spent, as is the custom on such occasions, in the greatest hilarity; and none appeared to enjoy it with a better relish than the priest. Dancing was kept up till nine o'clock, when supper was announced. The ladies being seated, a place was assigned to me by the side of the divine, to whom I had previously been introduced. This secured to me a seat in the vicinity of the choicest wit as well as wine, that was in circulation; for, after paying his respects once or twice to the wine that was before him, his good humor and sociability soon convinced me that

he would not willingly become the victim of too rigid fastings and carnal mortifications.

Supper being over, dancing was resumed. Those ladies and gentlemen who were not upon the floor, were smoking. The ladies here are general smokers; and do it, too, with a grace which, to a smoker, is a study. At first, it appeared rather strange to receive, from the delicate fingers of a female, a lighted cigar, yet fresh with the flavor which her own lips had imparted to it; but, with such tuition, we were quickly qualified to assume the customs of the country, and we now flatter ourselves that we can go through all that delicate etiquette with as much ease as though we were "to the manner born." The ladies were dressed in the Spanish style, and appeared quite charming; they chiefly require animation. Their complexion is rather brunette, their hair dark, eyes black; and, generally, they are of a low stature.

We withdrew from the party at an early hour, after presenting our sincere congratulations to the mother of the "orator of the day," and bidding adieu to the hospitable family. Once more in the street, we were lost in meditation. The incidents of the day came into review before us—the first day that we had passed here among strangers in a strange land. We found ourselves absolutely regretting to part from friends of an hour's creation. He who has wandered much in the world may have experienced similar sensations. These are some of the transitory passages, "the sunny spots" of life, which

memory most dearly cherishes. They are snatched, as it were, from the dull round of existence, and are sanctified by the unexpected gratification that attends them. These are a part of the items that constitute what man calls happiness—the jewels, no doubt; and we shall make them lawful prize wherever and whenever they fall in our way. These reflections brought us to our lodgings, where preparations were yet to be made for our departure for Merida the next morning; and, in spite of old philosophy or new acquaintance,

"The hour approaches, Tam maun ride."

At nine o'clock in the morning my conveyance was ready at the door. It was a rude vehicle, called here a *calesa*, somewhat resembling the old-fashioned New England chaise, but as heavy and uncouth as wood and trappings could make it. The machine was drawn by three mules abreast, attached to it by plaited ropes. All the preparations having been completed, we started under whip and spur, Jehu-like, rattling over the rocks, to the no small hazard of bones and baggage. Fortunately, this speed did not continue long. The road, for two miles, was overflowed; and the Indian guide was necessarily compelled to direct his team with a greater degree of circumspection.

The road, for the first sixteen miles, was over a low marshy country, partially Macadamized, and raised in the form of a causeway; rather rough, but smooth compared with very many of our own,

even in the State of New York. The sides were filled in with brush-wood as far as Hunucuma, about sixteen miles from Sisal. We stopped here, at noon, two hours, to give our faithful mules an opportunity to refresh, after a sultry morning's travel. This pleasant village stands about half way between Sisal and Merida, and is surrounded by beautiful shrubbery. From this town, which possesses little interest to the foreign tourist, the open country appears to advantage; but it is not under a high state of cultivation. The road hence to Merida is finished in a style that would have done credit to the imperial enterprise of Hadrian. We passed through several small villages, occupied principally by the huts of the Indians, and, at five o'clock in the afternoon of the 22d instant, arrived at the metropolis, thirty-six miles distance from the place of landing, and drove up to the door of the amiable Doña Michaelé, who keeps the only public house in the city — not for her own personal advantage, as she informs her guests, but solely for their accommodation. Blessings on her kind heart, although her professions of philanthropy "something smacked, something grew too," yet we believed every word of them, and made ourselves perfectly at home in the shortest possible time.

The residence of this lady stands in about the centre of the city, occupying a large space of ground, is one story high, with ranges of rooms and stables, forming a square, which is filled with fruit-trees of the tropics. The rooms are spacious and airy: they have large doors, and balconied windows, grated, but

without glass. The floors are laid with stone, set in mortar. Of the Doña and her table, I may be permitted to say, that when I paid my bill I felt that I had cancelled all the obligations which her bounty had imposed upon me. Chocolate, with "panadulza," a sweet bread made by the nuns, is served early in the morning, according to the general custom of the country; breakfast is ready at nine o'clock, made up of Spanish American dishes, composed of strips of meat, eggs, tortillas, and frejoles, (that is, corncake and black beans,) with coffee and wine. Her guests consisted of two Americans besides myself, who came here to trade, and remained, not to pray, but to be preyed upon by the most dismal prospects—three Mexican officers, who were exiled by Santa Ana; and three Spanish Jews, who were from Havana, with merchandise. Dinner was served at three o'clock. The Doña undoubtedly gave her boarders the best the market afforded, for she certainly exerted herself to render them satisfied with their fare. It would be absurd to enumerate dishes, and to object to the style of cooking because it did not happen to be in accordance with my own preferences or habits. Among the Mexicans of our company, however, it may not be improper to remark, that etiquette in the disposition of their food was but little observed; and knives and forks were unceremoniously thrown aside for the more primitive utensils with which nature had provided them.

The 23d of December was the festival of St. Christoval. It was made, like all the saints' days in

Catholic countries, a gala-day. Measures were taken accordingly, a week previous, to give to this festival its full effect. In front of the church is a large square, around the sides of which were placed poles and staging, forming an amphitheatre, adorned with rude paintings of various animals, and dressed off with flags and evergreens; the area of which was to be the scene of a modern *bull-fight*. The morning was ushered in by the firing of guns and squibs. The stores were closed, churches opened, bells ringing, and the population was literally emptied into the streets. At twelve o'clock signal rockets were fired, and the gates of the amphitheatre, which appeared to be the principal point of attraction, were thrown open, and a bull was led in by four Indians. Indians, mounted on horses, attacked him with spears, whilst others goaded him almost to madness with barbed sticks. A great noise was made with drums and horns, and by the acclamations of the audience, composed of ladies and gentlemen of Merida and its vicinity. The major part, however, of the assembly was composed of Indians. This portion of the festival was continued during the day; at the close of which the amphitheatre was deserted, and the neighboring houses were filled with people, abandoning themselves to the excitements of every variety of games, and to the dance.

This was the first bull-bait I had ever witnessed, and the impression it left upon me I shall never forget. These spectacles, however, have been so often and so graphically described by others, that it would

be almost presumption in me to attempt a description of the scene, or an analysis of my own feelings. The performance disgusted me to a degree, and has struck me as one of the most extraordinary psychological phenomena in nature, that any body of human beings could be found to whom such exhibitions should be, as they are to the Spanish, sources of the deepest interest and excitement.

To-day I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of several gentlemen of the place, who gave me a most cordial reception; among whom was the President of Yucatan. He is a successful merchant, a plain, unassuming, practical man; apparently, however, not much versed in political intrigues. The people have recently declared themselves independent of Mexico, and the government is now about sending commissioners to the capital of that republic to treat with Santa Ana, offering again to return to the Mexican Confederacy upon certain conditions; which, if acceded to, will give to this province most decided advantages, besides being still under the protection of the Confederacy.

Christmas eve we passed upon the Alameda, the public promenade of the city. The occasion brought together the great mass of the population. The ladies were prettily dressed, with veils tastefully thrown over their heads; and a beautiful moonlight evening was rendered still more charming by their smiles. The great majority were Indians. Their white, loose, cotton dress, bordered with colored needlework, with the janty veil, carelessly worn, gives

them an airy appearance, and embellishes features that are naturally pleasant and mild. There probably were six thousand Indians in this collection, mingling with the multitude, without any apparent distinction of rank or race, quietly indulging themselves in their walks. No loud talking or noisy merriment could be heard. Every thing appeared to be conducted in a spirit of harmony and kind feeling. The temperance pledge was alike unnecessary and unknown.

At twelve o'clock (midnight) the crowd dispersed; a portion of them to the cathedral, to attend the performance of high mass. An immense crowd was assembled in this place. The aisles, domes, and fretted work of the windows were illuminated. The sound of music and the voice of the priest only were heard—all else was silence. The multitude knelt. It was an imposing sight—the dark ages were forgotten; and the prejudices of a thousand years were subdued in a moment. At two o'clock I left the cathedral and returned to my lodgings, with more liberal feelings, and a better man.

Christmas, as a holy-day, is strictly observed by the general suspension of business, and service is performed at all the churches, as in most other Catholic countries. The only exception to this uniformity perhaps consists in the devotional ceremonies usually offered to a cross affixed to the walls of the Bishop's palace, which rites concluded the religious offices of the day. These services were performed

by the Indians—and give but too painful evidence of the influence of their priesthood.

The next day was Sunday, and concluded the feast of St. Christoval. The churches were crowded, as is usual, during the morning; but the majority of the multitude that attended the service consisted of females, mostly Indian. In the afternoon we proceeded towards the church of St. Christoval, for the purpose of witnessing the closing scene of a festival which is finished by a procession. Before reaching our destination, however, we met it, and took a position in a door-way, the better to observe it and be out of the crowd. It was headed by eight or ten Indians, with long brass and tin horns, making the most discordant sounds imaginable. Then followed Indian boys, drumming on hollow pieces of wood, squalid and dirty in their appearance, and who were the only ones of a like character that presented themselves to view among the immense multitude. Next came the priests, chanting for the saints, and waving the burning incense, followed by drums and fifes in advance of a large image of the Virgin, decked in various colors, interspersed with tinsel ornaments, surmounted with glass vases, in which a lighted candle or a bouquet of flowers was alternately placed. This imposing display was borne upon the shoulders of eight Indians, surrounded by priests. The rear was brought up by a company of soldiers with fixed bayonets; the whole surrounded by an immense crowd, filling up the streets for a great distance. All were uncovered, and many knelt

during the haltings of the procession, which were purposely frequent, so as to enable the people to salute the image. This grand display occupied about three hours, the procession passing through the principal streets and back to the church, where it was dismissed. The whole dispersed with the utmost quietness; some to their homes, and others to places of gaming and dancing.

In returning to our lodgings we met a calesa, preceded by two Indians with lanterns, tinkling small bells, followed by four Indian soldiers, armed with muskets. The carriage contained a priest, who was going to administer holy unction. The people, as is the universal custom here, knelt as he passed. To obviate a similar necessity, we retreated into the nearest house; thereby escaping a charge of heresy, and the unpleasantness of coming in contact with muddy streets.

A stranger, on his first arrival in this country, is at a loss where to place the Indian in the scale of social life. He sees him clean and well dressed, mingling with the whites, and without distinction. To have Indian blood is no reproach, and family groups, in many cases, show this most palpably. It is not unusual to hear mothers threaten to send their children home to their respective fathers, whenever their rudeness requires chiding. The Indian, however, performs the menial labor of the country—and there is an appearance of apathy in his looks and actions, which seems to carry with it the signs of a broken, or at least a subdued spirit—resting upon

him like a melancholy vision, a dreamy remembrance, of better days. For, say what we please of him, he is the humble descendant of a once great and powerful people—the "children of the sun," who were lords of that soil on which their offspring are now held in humiliating vassalage.

We were roused early this morning by the tramp of horses. It was a body of cavalry returning from a neighboring town, where they had been ordered for the purpose of quelling an *émeute*. They were headed by a small bloody-looking Mexican, with a pair of mustachios that the proudest Castilian might have envied. He was dressed in a blue roundabout, loose white trousers, and a glazed Mexican hat. His followers were mounted upon mules of the most jaded appearance, saddled and caparisoned with manilla matting and ropes. Each wore a shirt, trousers, and straw hat; and was bare-footed, except a pair of huge spurs, which embellished the otherwise naked heel of each rider. Their usual arms were the broadsword and pistols, but this squadron was not well equipped; and the common bayonet, with them, was frequently compelled to do duty for one or both of the other weapons. After so particular a description of these soldiers, it is a matter of extreme regret that the result of the expedition cannot be minutely stated. I feel entitled, however, to indulge a little pride in making the announcement, that they did return crowned with wreaths of victory.

This season of the year is the high noon of the holy-days, which engrosses the best part of the year,

and which formerly included two-thirds of it. Their number, some time since, was reduced by a bull from the Pope. The people testify their respect for these festival days (for such they are denominated) by processions and such amusements as are suited to their taste. Notwithstanding the acknowledged debasing effects of their sports and pastimes, which wholly consist of bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and gambling, they are not disgraced by any riotousness or drunkenness. It is a singular fact, that, although the degrading habit of gambling is general, among all classes of society, male and female, drunkenness and its concomitant vices are unknown. The priests give countenance to these recreations, if they may be so called, both by their presence and participation. It is but due to the Yucatecos to say, that during my residence in their province, I never observed any cheating or quarrelling at the gaming table, nor have I observed others tempted by improper means to participate in the hazard of the gaming table, after the manner of people at the North. Gambling seems to be a passion peculiar to the Mexican's character, which he indulges from motives quite independent of mercenary considerations. They usually gamble with cards; but of the skill or even the names of their games, I must plead an utter ignorance. Their interest would sometimes become perfectly intense, as every lineament of their countenances abundantly testified. Hope, fear, satisfaction, and disappointment followed each other in quick succession over their faces, while the portly priest and the flippant señora, who stood

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near, with their bets vibrating with the chances of the game, seemed scarcely less interested in the result than the more immediate parties. Had a spell of enchantment been laid upon the whole group, they could not have been more completely at the mercy of the uncontrollable hazards of their game. All moral accountability seemed to disappear before its irresistible fascinations.

THE PLANTAIN.

CHAPTER II.

Description of Merida, Geographical and Historical — The City — Public Squares — The Market — Trade — Habits and Customs — Health — The Public Buildings — A way to get a Husband — New Year Eve — New Year Day — The City and Environs — A Touch of Music — A Country Seat — Congress of Yucatan — Franciscan Ruins — More Holy-days — Cock-fighting — A Drill — The Bishop at Home — The College — Miracles.

MERIDA, the capital of Yucatan, is situated about the twenty-first degree of north latitude, and is elevated some twenty-five feet above the level of the sea. The thermometer ranges at about eighty of Fahrenheit, and the maximum length of the days is nearly thirteen hours. The city was built upon the ruins of an Indian town, which was destroyed by the Spaniards in their superstitious zeal, so madly manifested in the destruction of every thing throughout Mexico that was found belonging to the people whom they had conquered. The present population is calculated at twenty thousand, the majority of whom are Indians and half-breeds.

The city was founded in 1542. From the few scattered facts which have been handed down to us by history, we gather that, prior to the Spanish conquest, there existed in Yucatan a people of an origin remote and unknown, who were under the subjec-

tion of rulers, with fixed principles of law and order; had passed through the ordinary vicissitudes of nations, and finished their career by losing, at once, their liberty and their dominions. The triumphant forces of the Spaniards having obtained full possession of the country, the Church came in to execute its part; and their language, manners, customs, and religion, were disseminated by the steady and persevering arm of Catholic power and management. To complete the work, every thing that had a tendency to remind the vanquished of the past was obliterated, in accordance with the grovelling policy or the blind fanaticism that marked the times. Ancient pictorial and hieroglyphical manuscripts were burnt; their idols, images, and planispheres, were destroyed, and their temples and cities were razed to the ground. It is melancholy to reflect that a chasm has thus been made in the early history of the country, which the historian must despair of ever seeing filled up.

Merida, since it was rebuilt, has not rendered itself in anywise historical. Its remote and isolated position has prevented its participation, to any extent, in the political struggles which have marked the history of the city of Mexico; and the inhabitants appear to have availed themselves of their peace and political composure by a cultivation of letters, and general mental cultivation, to an extent certainly unsurpassed in any province of Mexico.

The streets of Merida are of a good width, laid out at right angles. The side-walks are four feet

wide, paved with rough stone. The houses are quite uniform in their appearance, and are built of stone. The mason-work is creditable. The roofs of their houses are flat, and their exteriors finished in stucco; some of which are painted in the Moorish style, with balconied windows, ornamented, and presenting rather a pretty appearance. The middle of the street is the lowest, forming a passage to carry off the water. During ordinary rains, small rivers, comparatively speaking, form themselves; flooding the streets to the edge of the walks, and rendering them impassable for hours after the rain has ceased, without great exposure. Candles are used for lighting the city; but, of course, for that purpose, are almost useless.

This place contains a number of fine squares, the principal of which is in the centre of the city. It is bounded by the cathedral, bishop's palace, government house, and dwellings occupied by the citizens. In the middle of this square is a *waterless fountain.* No attention is paid to this place, which might justly be compared, from its deserted aspect, to the "Neutral Ground" in New Orleans; and, like that, it is susceptible of being rendered a most beautiful promenade. On the side of this square is the dwelling of Simon Peon, Esq. The front is ornamented with a relic of the times prior to the conquest. It is a huge door-way, elaborately carved in figures and lines. The city is indebted to this gentleman for this display of his liberality and taste, in preserving a very interesting memento of a people whose his-

tory, probably, is destined to remain for ever sealed to mankind.

The market occupies a large square, in a central position, having two sides devoted to the sale of meats, and the other two remaining open. The interior is provided with accommodations for the venders of fruits and vegetables. The meats are of an indifferent quality; they are cut up and sold by the butcher in long strips. Their variety of vegetables is limited, and but little skill is shown in their cultivation. Poultry is abundant and cheap, as are also the other *necessaries* of life.

There is but a very limited trade here, of any kind. The resources of the country are too small for it to be otherwise. To give some idea of the state of trade in the vicinity of the great public square, just described, it is sufficient to state that, in crossing it, we have disturbed the buzzard and killdeer at noonday.

At three o'clock in the afternoon, there is an almost total suspension of business. The stores, generally, are closed, and the inhabitants betake themselves to their hammocks, to the enjoyment of their favorite siesta, which consists of a nap of an hour or more; an indulgence as indispensable to a Mexican as his cigar. The calesa is the only wheel-carriage that is to be found in the streets. Indian porters take the place of drays, and are seen carrying barrels and bales upon their backs, secured by a plaited rope passed over their foreheads. Being accustomed, from childhood, to this kind of labor,

they are enabled to take loads of extraordinary weight, and to convey them to a great distance with an ease that is really wonderful.

The climate of Merida, though very dry, and not subject to great changes, is productive of febrile diseases at all seasons of the year, from which even the natives are not exempted. Their bilious, much resembles the yellow fever; and, in many cases, proves fatal. The fever and ague is no stranger here. Pulmonary complaints are common, and consumption carries off many. This malady most frequently shows itself after severe attacks of the fever and ague, and makes a conquest of its victim in a very short period.

The principal, as well as the most prominent, of the public buildings, are the churches. The cathedral is a structure that would attract the attention of the traveller in any part of the world. It was erected in the sixteenth century. Its architecture is of the ecclesiastical style of that age; and, altogether, it has a most commanding appearance. It has well-proportioned domes, pinnacles, turrets, and lofty windows; and it occupies, with the palace of the bishop of Yucatan, one entire side of the most important square of the city. The interior is imposing, from its numerous and splendidly decorated shrines. Its vaulted roof, supported by immense stone pillars, gives it an air of solemn grandeur peculiarly applicable to the ceremonies that are daily performed within its precincts. The arms of Mexico are displayed upon the exterior front of the build-

ing, which is finished with stone and stucco, with saints in basso-relievo.

The bishop's palace, adjoining, is plain. It is of two stories high, painted green; and is accessible by a gateway opening into a court, over which are emblazoned the crosier and mitre. The doors and windows are much dilapidated. The title of a palace is somewhat of a misnomer for this edifice, if one were to judge from its external appearance.

There are fourteen church establishments within the city and its suburbs; they, generally, are well built; and many of them are remarkable for the power and influence of their particular saints—in popular estimation. For instance, that of St. Anne is one which the ladies frequent, to pray for good husbands. Whether the gentlemen go there to ask for similar blessings, I did not learn; but I was informed through a source that it would be impolite to doubt, that, in many instances, the petition of the lonely spinster has been most favorably received. In this church is a large collection of bone and wax figures, representing the various limbs of the human body; as, also, crutches, left there by invalids as offerings to the tutelar saint (St. Barbe) who has favorably heard their supplications. Models of vessels are deposited here by those who have been preserved from imminent danger at sea, through, as the devotees suppose, the efficacy of their appeals and sacrifices to the saint.

We observed, on entering the church, parts of a human skeleton set near the vase of holy water; put

there, possibly, that all might see and be reminded that "to this condition we must come at last!" Whether the priests intended that they should convey a moral, as did those in use among the ancient Egyptians, or placed them there for other purposes, could not conveniently be ascertained. Be that as it may, they have an imposing effect. The taste generally displayed in these churches is not very pleasing to the eye of a stranger. The images of our Saviour are rude figures, and what made them appear still worse was, that they were decorated according to the prevailing fashion of the country; a style which was calculated to awaken any other than reverential emotions.

New Year's eve found me on the Alameda, (the promenade of the city,) where I mingled with the multitude which had collected to enjoy the pleasantness of the evening at this, the most delightful season of the year in Yucatan.

On the morning of New Year, 1842, I went early to the cathedral. Dense masses of Indians, principally females, in their plain cleanly dress, tastefully arranged, were assembled around the different shrines at which the priests were officiating. When I returned to breakfast, I met my fellow-companions of the house at table; but there were none of those outpourings of good feelings, those kind wishes of happiness that, in former days, were wont to meet me in the land of my birth. For one hearty greeting of "a happy New Year!" I would have given for the sake of "auld lang syne," most cheer-

fully would I have given—"a thousand returns!" But "New Year's," alas! is no festival day of the heart in Merida.

The day was dull throughout. After the services of the church were finished, about nine o'clock, the streets were quite deserted. I then visited the Indians in the suburbs. Their simple huts were comfortable, so far as mud and stone could make them, and tolerably clean. Their furniture is composed of nothing more than a few earthen vessels, calabashes, and hammocks swung across the room. The walls of some of them were ornamented with rude wooden crosses; and, occasionally, pictures of saints in tin frames.

The environs of the city present but few pleasant walks. In fact they are not required, for the inhabitants have not a taste for pedestrian exercises, and scarcely ever walk when they can enjoy any less fatiguing mode of locomotion. The practice of riding in the calesa is almost universal. The ladies, especially, are extremely partial to it; and having an uncouth gait, they thus appear to the best possible advantage. Thus mounted and armed with their fan, (that indispensable appendage to a Mexican lady,) they go forth fully equipped with fascinations, conquering and to conquer. Their rides are wholly confined to the streets, as the scenery in the vicinity of Merida offers few inducements to the equestrian, while the roads constitute a special annoyance. As to the cultivation of the soil, nature has been left to perform the whole task, almost entirely unaided

either by art or industry. Surely, thrift is not indigenous to this country. The tropical trees and plants put forth their blossoms, and the rich perfumes fill the air with their balmy sweets. But there is a chilling contrast between the loveliness of vegetable nature about me, and the condition of man, to whose care it is intrusted. We never have admired the one without wishing that we had the power to exalt the other to a position equally worthy of the hand that made it.

We reached our lodgings in season to hear a Mexican disquisition on cock-fighting, before the commencement of a "grand concert," that was to take place in the evening, and to which we had been favored with an invitation. The *élite* of the city were to be present, and no small gratification was anticipated. It took place in a long hall kept for this and other public purposes. The music was instrumental—and the performers consisted principally of amateurs. It was a matter of surprise and disappointment to find that only seventeen ladies and ten gentlemen constituted the audience. It was odd to us, to see the fairer part of the assembly set apart from the gentlemen; an arrangement which, if we are not deceived, gave no more satisfaction to the ladies than to the gentlemen. The former were quite pretty, and their dress exceedingly neat; the arrangements of the head in particular exhibited very good taste.

On the following day I made a visit to a gentleman's country place, situated about two miles from

the city. It was a beautiful morning. Under the smiles of a rising sun and a cloudless sky nature appeared to be embellished in all her charms. After a very agreeable walk I arrived at the house; but was disappointed in finding the owner at home. A few Indians were hanging listlessly about the premises, under the charge of a major domo, whose situation was manifestly quite a sinecure. The mansion was of two stories with piazzas, large, and well built of stone; but had nothing very peculiar in its construction. The grounds about it were neatly and tastefully arranged. The division alleys of the garden were laid with stone, covered with composition, ornamentally disposed, and answering the two-fold purpose of a walk and a gutter to conduct the water to the parts where it was required. The orange, the cocoa, the plantain, and the wide-spread banana, were loaded with fruit. Clusters of smaller tropical shrubbery, and myriads of flowers, were in perfection. The enclosures teemed with vegetation, growing in unrestricted luxuriance. This vegetation is only sustained by the aid of irrigation. The water is supplied from immense wells and cisterns, which are opened in large numbers for that purpose. This practice was originally introduced into Spain by the Moors, who thus changed quite barren wastes into productive gardens. Even the courses of rivers were sometimes diverted to effect this important object. Many of the provinces of the parent country, although since suffered by neglect to revert to their former uselessness, bear evidence of the important

benefits that resulted from the system. The conquerors of Mexico were aware of its advantages, of which they availed themselves extensively in their agricultural pursuits. These reservoirs are frequently made through a calcareous formation, to the depth of a hundred feet, and are supplied with water both from fountains and from the rains of summer. Broad curbs of stone and mortar are formed around them, from eight to ten feet high, which are used as platforms for drawing up the water by means of revolving buckets, turned by a spindle, and emptying, in their evolutions, into conductors leading to reservoirs located near the place where it may afterwards be wanted. Ascending to the balcony of the building, I had a partial view of the city, embosomed among trees, with its domes and turrets peering above their tops. After acknowledging the hospitality with which I had been received, I made my adieus, and returned at an early hour to the city.

The Congress of Yucatan is now in session. It is held in two rooms, connected with each other by double doors. These rooms are neatly and plainly fitted up for the purpose, having a small gallery or platform at the sides, for the accommodation of spectators. These apartments comprise a portion of a convent once belonging to the Jesuits, who formerly exercised a powerful sway in this province. In 1825 their property was confiscated to the government; when this and other orders of monasteries and nunneries were dissolved by the prevailing voice of the people. Small remains now only exist of this once

potent and dreaded class. The whole building, with the exception of the part mentioned, and the church, is in a ruinous condition, with broken walls and ragged casements. Birds of prey, fluttering about and resting upon the trees that overtop the seat of this once proud, but now fallen society, present a lesson that others of a similar cast might profit by; yet now, in the nineteenth century, there are those living in Mexico, who not only strenuously advocate the maintenance of the order of Loyola, but are exerting their influence to have it reinstated to all its pristine wealth, power, and ancient privileges. To revert to the business before Congress—the houses were discussing the propriety of appointing commissioners to Vera Cruz, for the purpose of arranging for a secession from the great plan of independence that had been proclaimed, and again to return "to their first love," under the control of the Mexican confederacy. The members were good-looking, well dressed, and of gentlemanly behavior—and the system of duelling and bullying practised so extensively in many of our own legislative assemblies, is unknown to the unsophisticated individuals who constitute this body. They probably have not arrived to that state of civilization, which requires such physical agencies to illustrate and to enforce their arguments.

A temptation to visit the most extensive of the modern ruins of this province could not be resisted. The Monastery of St. Francisco, which is situated nearly in the centre of Merida, was erected upon a mound or foundation that, probably, was the former

site of some important structure belonging to the original inhabitants of the place, which fell under the destroying hand of the conqueror. The caciques and their people were driven out, or perished by the ruthless sword; and the church, following fast upon their footsteps, divided the spoils. Where are they now? The vanquished and the vanquisher are numbered with the things that were!, and we now stand upon the dilapidated memorial that indistinctly marks the greatness of the one, and the downfall of the other.

This monastery was founded in 1520, without being completed until 1600. It was constructed of walls, after the plan of a fortification, to ward off the attacks of the Indians, who made sudden and frequent attempts to regain their dominions and to annoy their enemies. It occupies about five acres of ground, enclosed by walls forty feet high and eight thick, with walks upon the top. The material is of hard stone, but composed of small pieces, imbedded in a firm mass by the means of mortar. This vast pile, at one time, contained upwards of two thousand friars. Popular opinion drove them out in the political changes of 1825. Only few of the order remain in Yucatan, and they are supported by the church.

The entrance to these ruins is through a huge doorway into a room which was evidently used for persons in waiting for egress, when great caution was requisite in opening the gates, for fear of being surprised by the lurking foe. The arched ceiling of the room is painted with flying ecclesiastical figures,

and the apartment is now used as a stable. From thence the entrance leads to a large square, the sides of which were once occupied by churches, corridors, and rooms. Passing through these, over the fallen ruins covered with a rank vegetation, by long halls, we come to a room that might have been a place of devotion, judging from the unusual care exhibited in the architecture of the walls, which now, however, was more or less broken and defaced. Two trap-doors were in the centre, through which is a descent, by stone steps, to an apartment twelve by eighteen feet, and six feet high. This room contained piles of human bones, having been a receptacle for those who died of the cholera. This cell had passages connected with it, but they were so choked up with rubbish that they could not be penetrated. After clambering over broken walls, we reached a second floor, containing halls and rooms that had been used for libraries and lodgings, as I inferred from the words placed over the doors. In proceeding along the halls, or entering the deserted rooms, the hollow sound of the intruder's footstep drives the frightened bat from his resting-place, and the lizard to his hole. The descent here leads through a succession of rooms and cells, under ground, from whence we left the buildings and passed on through the rank grass surrounding them to a portion of the area, which was formerly cultivated as a garden. The stone walk could yet be seen, and the taste and skill of the designer were perceptible. Fruit-trees still re-

main, as also wells and reservoirs for bathing and fishing.

On returning to the gateway, and ascending the front or principal wall, the highest summit of one of the pinnacles is attained by a ladder of ropes; from which one may obtain a bird's-eye view of the city and surrounding country, as also of the immense pile of ruins around him. In front of the interior space are two churches, in a tolerable state of preservation, built in the old Spanish style of pinnacled roof and arches. On the left, ruins of an immense hall are seen, with its large broken arch, leaving the whole interior, with its painted ceilings, exposed to view. Farther on are crumbling bastions and thick walls, falling, covered with ivy and other vegetation. Squares are filled up with masses of rubbish, and overgrown with trees. Symbols of the cross were scattered about, bearing evidence of the class of people that had last been its rulers. On the right, you look down into the deep recesses where, but a moment since, you might have stumbled over the emblems of a once haughty and potent priesthood. All now is silent. No life is stirring, save the ominous buzzard fluttering over the tottering pinnacles, or perched upon the blackened and decaying walls, finishing this picture of desolation.

The 6th of January is the holy-day of the Epiphany. At four o'clock in the morning the streets were completely thronged, principally with females. In the cathedral, at this early hour, it was quite dark. The prevailing gloom was rendered more palpable by

the distant appearance of lighted candles. The priests were administering the sacrament, with crowds of women surrounding them. The long aisles of the church were filled with kneeling devotees. As the sun rose, and threw his bright beams in at the windows, the scene became imposing. A vast multitude of females were offering up their orisons at the same moment; and, if the mind of the spectator could be divested of the prejudice that it was not merely the performance of a superstitious rite, but a direct and sincere appeal to the Giver of all good gifts, the sight, indeed, had been most cheering to the eye, most gratifying to the heart.

Early on the morning of the following day (Sunday) I visited the churches. They were filled, as usual, with the fairer part of creation. In walking through the streets, after breakfast, great preparations were observed to be making for a cock-fight, which was to take place at twelve o'clock. This, next to a bull-bait, is one of the most exciting scenes that can present itself to a Mexican populace. The gentlemen keepers were already wending their way to the pits, which are always kept in readiness for such amusements. The patricians of the city, the heads of the government, officers of the army, scions of the church, citizens, and the poor Indian, were all present, mixed up, helter-skelter; and bets, from six and a quarter cents to three hundred dollars, were freely offered and as readily accepted. There was much excitement, but no quarrelling or harsh words. The cock of the *Secretary of War* was beaten.

The latter part of the day was spent on the Square, where there were about three hundred Yucatan soldiers collected for drill. They were dressed in a shirt and short trousers, with the former article upon the outside, and a broad-brimmed palm-leaf sombrero. Their military equipments were in good keeping. They were officered principally by boys, who had received nothing more than a common school education, wore jacket and trousers, and used canes as substitutes for swords. During the drill a slight shower commenced, which dampened the martial propensities of our heroes with marvellous rapidity. Whatever might have been their preferences to a fight, they certainly preferred to drill another day.

I embraced an opportunity, which was now offered me, of visiting the bishop at his palace. Entering a large doorway in the centre of the court-yard, and ascending a flight of stone steps to a range of corridors, I was met by a servant, who conducted me into an ante-room. My name was taken in; and, in a few seconds, I was received by the bishop, in an adjoining room, with a most cordial welcome. He has a fine head. His person is tall, rather robust, and looked the bishop to the life. He was clad in a blue silk gown, and a cap of the same material, resting upon the crown of his head; and embellished with a massy gold chain around his neck, appended to which was a cross. He conversed respecting citizens and residents of the United States with whom he was acquainted, either personally or by reputation; and spoke of the shipwreck of our national

vessel, the schooner Porpoise, on board of which he was a passenger, while on her way to Vera Cruz. He expressed himself in the highest terms of commendation of the officers, and gave a glowing account of the perilous voyage. He showed his library with a great politeness, and a becoming pride; but it struck me as being quite limited for one in his position. He expressed himself liberally; and no doubt, as his countenance and actions indicated, he is a right worthy man.

His rooms were fitted up more with an eye to the useful, than to any apparent desire for display. The ceiling was ornamented with lithographs of battles, interspersed with patterns of French fire-boards. Previous to taking leave, he very kindly offered all the aid in his power for facilitating my visit to the towns in the interior. For this, as for other civilities, I shall probably never have an opportunity of testifying to him the full extent of my gratitude.

He passed with us through his house to the door of the college, adjoining, when he left us in charge of the rector, with instructions to conduct us through the building. The institution is called "Minerva." The first room entered was the library, which was small and badly arranged. It was comprised of works principally relating to the church. It contains a portrait of the founder of the college, a building which was completed in 1775. It is supported by certain taxes paid by each curate in the province. These having been cut off, in a great degree, by the recent changes in the government, seriously affect

the institution, which, at this time, is quite limited in its means. Though the pay of the president and professors is small, and the contingent expenses are light, it is apprehended that it cannot long be continued. Its studies do not go beyond the high schools in the United States. We hastily glanced at this building, and then entered the cathedral with our attentive friend, who took especial pains to point out every thing worthy of particular notice. Upon a close examination of the altars and shrines, it was plainly to be discovered that the church was poor. The time is gone by in which churches are made the depositories of the precious metals, formerly a source of so much wealth to them.

One of the shrines contains a wooden image of our Saviour, to which attention was called by one of the priests that accompanied us through the church. He stated to us with much gravity, that it was preserved harmless from a great fire by a miracle, and that it is now looked upon as a most sacred relic. A room was shown us containing portraits of all the bishops of Yucatan. They were badly executed. One of them was pointed out as having been a great eater; he would devour a whole turkey at his dinner, and say, "it was a fine chicken." Another was shown who had performed the miracle of changing sour apples to sweet, a function which has given its proprietor's name to a species of apple, which is retained to this day.

CHAPTER III.

Mechanical Pursuits — The Circulating Medium — A Ball — A Remnant of Franciscans — Signs of Decay in the Suburbs — The Cemetery — The Weather — A Whole Congregation Flogged — The Wise Men — The Gentlemen — Extra Civilities — The Appearances of Trade — Products of the Soil — Education — Language of the Indians — The Ancient People — Waldeck's Opinion of them — The Maya Language — The Lord's Prayer in Maya — Grammars of that Dialect — Difficulties in Speaking it — Traits of the Indian Character.

HAVING resolved to visit the towns in the interior, I was under the necessity of making some preparations which brought me in contact with the mechanics of Merida. It being customary and even necessary to travel chiefly upon the backs of horses and mules, the saddler and the tailor were first called into requisition. These professions were principally filled by Indians and half-breeds, who, though clumsy in their business, were far more expert than might have been expected. The custom of the country invariably exacts the payment of one-half of the amount agreed upon in advance, in order that the contractor may be in funds to purchase stock, wherewith to fill his contract. Though their delays are very annoying, yet they are generally honest, and may be depended upon for ultimately fulfilling their engagements.

The wants of the people are so limited that few mechanics are necessary. Nature is kind and lavish. The articles necessary to cover and protect the body are not numerous, and every thing requisite for its nourishment abounds. It looks very odd, I had almost said humiliating, to see men sitting upon the public sidewalks, working upon a lady's dress, and similar articles hanging around the door-ways of their houses, as a sign of the services which they hold themselves competent and ready to render. Manufactories are nowhere to be seen; the clatter of the loom or the noise of the hammer never disturbs the quiet of Merida.

Some idea of the wealth or poverty of a country may be formed from an acquaintance with its currency. Silver is the basis of the circulation of Yucatan, of which the Spanish sixpence is the smallest. A fractional sort of change, however, is represented by the seeds of the *cacao*, two hundred and fifty grains of which are considered equal to sixpence. Of these, five grains constitute the smallest amount ever received in trade. In some of the provinces of the Mexican confederacy, pieces of soap pass as a circulating medium, and lose none of their estimated value for a few washings, provided the balance of exchange should not be such as to carry it out of the district where it is known. The great scarcity of money tends to reduce every thing else in an equal ratio. Servants' wages are from three to five dollars a month, and those of mechanics are at a proportionate rate. Rents are almost a nomi-

nal charge. This is partially produced by the number of untenanted buildings that are decaying without occupants.

The manner of doing business is simple. Nothing of that stir and bustle is seen that is to be observed in cities and towns of the United States; nor do you find the care-worn and anxious look that is so often to be noticed with us. Speculation, kite-flying, lame ducks, bulls and bears, and all those curses with which large mercantile communities are usually visited, are entirely unknown in the province of Yucatan.

During my stay in the city of Merida, a ball was given at the Governor's house, apropos of some political event, which I did not esteem of moment enough to remember. As usual upon such occasions, there were grand preparations. The man-milliners were busily engaged upon female finery—and their shop-boards were decorated with the most unlimited gayety. Every door-way along the principal streets, throughout the day, was filled with ladies seated upon stools, (their favorite posture,) working fancy articles, in anticipation of the approaching festival. But their dresses gaping behind, and hanging loosely upon their shoulders, and their slip-shod feet, made them appear exceedingly slovenly at home, and awakened in me a strong desire to see them in full toilet at the ball in the evening.

On entering the hall, I passed through a dense line of ladies arranged along the corridors, principally mammas, and wall-flowering spinsters garlanding the corridors. The dancing had already commenced.

At first sight, the display was dazzling; but after the lapse of a few minutes, the fascination dissipated. The absence of all conversation, even of small-talk; which upon such occasions is a relief, rendered even the ball-room, like all their other domestic institutions here, exceedingly monotonous and dull. During the dance, not a lip is seen to move—like Marryat's wench, they refuse to talk, because they came here to dance! At the conclusion of a cotillon, the ladies took seats separate from the gentlemen. They dressed here in very good taste; though a partiality for brilliant colors was rather too conspicuously displayed for a Northern eye. There was no extravagant display of jewellery or rich brocades, in which particular I may be pardoned for commending their example to my own fair countrywomen. There were many pretty faces, that only required expression to render them charming. The skill of the man-milliner, however, deserves full credit. I will add, for the benefit of my bachelor friends, that there were in attendance about twelve ladies to one gentleman. This disproportionate abundance of females is common in warm climates, and constitutes, I believe, one of Bishop Warburton's arguments in defence of polygamy in Asia. The ladies in the corridors were silently enjoying their cigars during the whole evening, and only relieving the monotony of their occupation, by carrying on a telegraphic correspondence with some of their neighbors by the aid of their fans.

The ball, as I have already remarked, was given

at the Governor's house, which occupies a portion of the great square. The room was about fifty feet long by fifteen wide. The floor was of mortar; the ceilings high and roughly finished. The walls were ornamented with framed engravings, and the windows hung with white cotton curtains. A fine supper was provided; but I left the ball at an early hour, and jostled my way to my lodgings through an immense crowd of Indians, of both sexes, attracted by the festivities which I was just leaving.

Within the precincts of Merida, there is a regular monastery sustained by about twelve monks. In my rambles I passed the door of one of the friars, who invited me to walk in. He was a middle-aged man, clad in the usual garb of his order; a loose dress, and sandals tied about his ankles with cords. His hair was cut rounding; giving it the air of a Scotch bonnet resting lightly upon the top of his head. He was not only very polite, but a very learned man. In spite of my sterner judgment, I could not but sympathize with him, as he dilated upon the historical recollections of the old and notorious order to which he had attached himself in his youthful days. As he spoke of it in its glory, his enthusiasm broke forth with an almost inspired eloquence.

His room was large and airy, and appeared to have been arranged for a study. It was furnished with two chairs and a table. A few Spanish and Latin works were lying around. He conducted us through the long halls and corridors of the monastery, and described to us the various paintings that covered

the walls. They were principally representations of his tutelar saint, in the different periods of his eventful life, from his birth to his death; also, of the crucifixion of our Saviour. At a distance they might resemble pictures; but, on approaching them, the charm fled. They proved to be most execrable daubs.

The church attached to the monastery is well worth a visit. It has an immense shrine, formed by a group of figures in alto-relievo, large as life, representing saints and angels, and all profusely ornamented with gold and silver. One of the chapters of the church contains a representation of the crucifixion carved upon stone, beautiful, both for its design and its execution. It was found by the Spaniards on the island of Cozumal, the place where Cortes first landed, and has caused much speculation as to its origin. On returning to the room of our worthy guide, chocolate was served; and a conversation for an hour ensued upon the condition of the clergy of the United States, which arose from an inquiry into the *number and denomination of our monasteries!* I left him alone within his cheerless walls, and wended my way back to my home; each of us, no doubt, preferring his own situation to the other's. I can at least speak authentically as to one.

I continued my rambles in the suburbs on the following day. Here, dilapidation and ruin, and the want of cultivation, are too palpable. Churches built centuries ago, and now surrounded only by a few poor Indian huts, form a sad but instructive commentary upon the insufficiency of arbitrary power,

under the control of a religious hierarchy, to develope the intellectual or the physical resources of a people. Decay and desolation have overtaken all those institutions of an elder time, which now but serve, like the footsteps upon the shore of a deserted island, to prove the former presence of a more vigorous civilization. The hand of man has rarely interfered to protect these solemn memorials from oblivion. The grounds around them are but little cultivated, and are mostly covered by a thick growth of furze, with an occasional cocoa, orange, or tamarind tree. Here, however, the *ramon* grows to a great height, and is very valuable, its leaves and branches affording a nutricious food for horses.

About two miles from the city is a cemetery, appropriated to the dead of Merida. It is located in a beautiful situation; but, like most other public places in this country, it has been utterly neglected. It comprehends about half an acre of land, surrounded by a high wall; and is under the charge of a Catholic priest, who resides upon the premises. Those who can afford it are provided with vaults, built upon the surface of the ground. The poor are interred beneath the soil. The priest in charge does not seem to have permitted his solemn vicinage to disturb his digestion or dampen his spirits. His sleek and portly appearance reminded me, at once, of the "fat, round, oily little man of God," whose repose Thomson disturbs in his Castle of Indolence. He was kind and attentive in showing the premises; but his

conversation was very feeble, and indicated a mind almost demented with superstition.

The thermometer now, though the middle of January, ranges at about eighty. We have occasional showers, but the weather continues to be delightful. The mornings and evenings are perfectly enchanting. The climate is not so uniform as that of Cuba; rains are more frequent, and the dews more abundant. Colds and influenzas are common; and on this account it cannot, I think, be recommended to invalids with pulmonary affections.

Connected with one of the monasteries of the Jesuits, is the Church of Jesus. It has partially lost its ancient splendor by the removal of valuable plate and embellishments, which formerly belonged to it; and I should not detain my readers with a notice of it here, but for a most singular religious ceremony which I was permitted to witness within its walls during vespers. The congregation was composed principally of Indians. After the usual ceremonies were concluded, a large Indian prostrated himself upon the floor before the altar, carefully adjusted his limbs, and laid himself out as if he were preparing for burial. Men, with coils of rope about their heads, representing crowns of thorns, dressed in loose garments, and bending under the weight of a heavy cross, then entered and tottered up the aisles. A cross and scull were then passed around; the bearer repeating in Latin, as they were handed to be kissed, "This is the death, and this is the judgment!" When this form had been con-

cluded, we were all supplied with whips, (I declined to avail myself of their politeness,) the lights were extinguished, and all was darkness. Nothing was visible but the gigantic windows, and the outlines of the stupendous arches and fretted walls above us. The chamber of death was never more silent than was that church for the moment. While I was speculating upon what would probably occur next in the order of exercises, my meditations were suddenly interrupted by the sounds of stripes rising and echoing through every part of the vast edifice. That there was whipping going on, I had no doubt; but whether each one did his own whipping, or had it done by his neighbors, I was, for some time, unable to satisfy myself; but I soon discovered that the former was the case, upon the presumption, doubtless, that each one knew how much his case required better than any one else. This penitential ceremony continued for the space of fifteen minutes, at least, without intermission. When it ceased, which was at the tinkling of a bell, the candles were relighted, and the assemblage slowly left the church, apparently perfectly satisfied that they had received no more than they deserved.

I had the gratification of visiting a number of the learned men of Merida, or "sabios," as they are denominated by some travellers. In Yucatan, this title is not inappropriate. They are celebrated here, and very justly; for they are tolerably well informed; therein, having greatly the advantage of the mass of their fellow-citizens. They seem to be a chosen

band, living and moving in a distinct body within their own circle; like Rosicrucians, having no kindred spirits to whom they can attach themselves, or from whom they can increase their numbers. Thus, in the course of ordinary events, as their days approach to threescore and ten, their order must become gradually extinguished. One of them, to whom I paid frequent visits, was already upwards of ninety years of age, and one of the most interesting old men I have ever beheld. He seemed happy to see me; was fond of speaking of his youthful days; gave an account of his early studies and recreations; and, withal, a goodly portion of fatherly advice and admonition. His mind appeared to be vigorous; too much so, indeed, for the feeble state of his body. He was pleased to answer questions; and, when adverting to the state of the country, spoke with much feeling, but despairingly, of every thing connected with it.

I had the pleasure of meeting, to-day, with the gentlemanly owner of the estate upon which are the celebrated ruins of Uxmal. He was intelligent and communicative, and had travelled in the United States. He traced back, as far as practicable, the title-deeds of his forefathers to this land, in order, if possible, to gain some clew to its early history; but it led to nothing that could be made available to the traveller. He expresses great confidence in Mr. Stephens, who is now investigating these ruins, and to whom he had rendered every facility for the prosecution of his task. I asked him what he would take

for the land upon which those ruins were situated; and he readily replied, five thousand dollars. I declined to embark in a speculation in these lands, but did not hesitate to avail myself of the letters with which he was so kind as to favor me to the major-domos of his several estates; for which I beg leave here to express my most sincere thanks.

The social condition of the female sex in Yucatan, so far as my observation extends, compares very favorably with that of females of the same rank in the other provinces of Mexico. The Yucatecos ladies generally attend to their household affairs, and to the education of their children; but though their habits are rather domestic, the standard of virtue is not to be estimated as high as in the United States. Their personal attractions are quite inconsiderable. In the absence of animation and intelligence, nothing is left to fascinate or to be loved. The brunette complexion, regular features, black hair, and eyes of the same color, predominate. They dress in the Spanish fashion — bright colors are generally preferred — with a light veil thrown over their heads, and a profusion of jewellery and other ornaments carefully arranged about their persons. They seldom walk out, except to church, where they appear to more advantage than at any other place. At their houses, their carelessness of dress amounts to slovenliness. They may be seen at almost any hour of the day, swinging in their hammocks, with cigars in their mouths, or making their toilet in the doorway of their dwellings. It is a general custom here for

the ladies to sleep in this suspended apparatus. Those who are accustomed to the luxury of a bedstead, are not easily reconciled to this arrangement; and I have in vain tried to discover a sufficient reason for the prevalence of these articles, to the exclusion of the bedstead.

The gambling propensities of the ladies are as strong as those of the gentlemen; which, however, they do not indulge in to so great an extent. They mingle at the public tables, but good order and decorum always prevail.

A stranger is particularly struck with the apathy of the wife in her household affairs. She is seldom seen in conversation with her husband. Being poorly educated, she has no literary resources whatever. She is rarely seen with a book in her hand. The common topics of her household form the only points of intellectual contact between herself and her husband. Sleep is her chief resource; and, in the swing of the hammock, many of her best hours are lost in forgetfulness. Music, I found to my great surprise, was but little cultivated.

Considerable attention is paid to the education of children; but it is not deemed necessary, by parents, for them to proceed much beyond the first rudiments. The public school system is adopted, and kept up with some degree of ability, by the government and corporations. The towns are divided off into districts throughout the state, in which are two colleges and fifty-seven schools; besides others of select tuition, in which the elements of an ordinary education are

taught, together with the doctrines of the Romish church.

The impressions which I have received of the male population are as yet necessarily undefined, and would not perhaps warrant me in attempting to characterize them; but, so far as my knowledge extends, I am inclined to think them a proud, though not a supercilious people. It is that Castilian sort of pride which is identified with the old Spanish character; and which has descended from him as naturally to the Mexican as his siesta. This gives them, even in their ignorance, some character. While they have this pride about them, we may be sure they will not degenerate into Caffres. Though they have declared their independence of Mexico, and have promised to the world to prove themselves worthy of enjoying entire political liberty, yet it is very evident to a stranger, that a majority of the population are perfectly indifferent whether they return or remain under their present rulers. This apathy in political matters indicates a condition of the national mind, which is likely to be but little affected by the form of government under which it exists. Their constitution much resembles that of the United States. They have a President, Vice President, and two houses of legislators. The elective franchise extends to all, not excepting either the Indians or the blacks. The latter class is principally composed of runaway slaves from the neighboring islands. Their number, however, is small. All religions are tolerated; but that of the Catholic is *protected!*

In their private dwellings very little or no taste is displayed. Their furniture, generally, is plain. They are not very choice or select in the ornaments for their rooms, French lithographs in frames, such as are usually hung about in our bar-rooms and barbers' shops, being almost universal.

The people throughout Yucatan are exceedingly polite to strangers. It would be well for foreigners, however, to know that when, on presenting letters of introduction to the Yucatecos, they tender you all their earthly possessions, together with their personal services into the bargain; it would be wise to get accustomed as soon as possible to the habit of being satisfied with their individual attentions, without expecting an immediate transfer of the title-deeds of their estates. This would save much disappointment, as many of their civilities are empty ceremonies, offered only in conformity with their national customs.

Commercial transactions are limited to the supply of retail dealers in the city and country. The principal articles of trade are dry goods, imported from England and France, by the way of the Balize and Havana. The exportation of the products of the country is conducted through the same channel; but owing to the poverty of the soil, and the supineness of the people, it is likewise very circumscribed. On the whole, so far as my personal observation has yet extended, the land presents a barrenness of appearance which offers few of those inducements that have been held out for emigration, either to the husbandman or the mechanic.

The agricultural products of Yucatan are numerous. Corn, resembling that of New England, which constitutes one of the principal articles of food, and from which tortillas are prepared, is raised here in great abundance. Also black beans, so well known to travellers by the name of *frejoles*, constitute an agricultural staple of the country. Heniken is cultivated, and prepared for exportation, to a considerable extent. It is known in the United States as "Sisal hemp," and takes its name from the port whence it is shipped. It is indigenous, and grows upon a rocky and apparently barren soil, to the height of about twelve feet, from a short rough trunk. It is cut at a certain period, and the fibres drawn out and dried, after which it is prepared and put up for the market. Sugar and cotton are raised in some of the eastern districts; but very little attention is paid to their cultivation beyond the small demand for the home consumption. Hats, from the leaf of the palm, are manufactured in the interior in large quantities for exportation, and are shipped at Campeachy. They are known in our market as the "Campeachy hat."

There has been much speculation, to little purpose, respecting the original inhabitants of Yucatan. It is a subject so involved in doubt, that any satisfactory conclusions can scarcely be expected. Waldeck* is of opinion that it was settled by different

* For the use of a French copy of "Waldeck's Yucatan," I am indebted to my distinguished countryman, Mr. Stephens, for which, and for many other civilities, I embrace this opportunity to make my sincere acknowledgments.

nations, broken off from Tobasco and other states, who particularly used the Maya idiom. He gives further evidence of this fact, from the facial formation observable in sundry of the Indians at Merida, particularly in the women, who resemble, in their physiognomy, the sculptured faces upon the stones at Palenque. The delicately tapered straight leg, small knee joints, and large shoulders, are mentioned as characteristics strongly marking a similarity of descent. The more distant Indians, and especially those of the mountains, have preserved their idioms as well as their ancient customs in a much greater degree—their language being more pure, and their manners more uniform.

That these people are the descendants of the ancient Mayas, there is hardly room to doubt. That tongue now pervades the whole peninsula, and is understood and spoken even by the whites. They were well known to be far advanced in civilization when first discovered, the strongest evidences of which are scattered throughout the province. Their calendars have been deciphered; and their astronomical symbols and hieroglyphical signs have been identified with those of the Mexicans. They had also their picture writings, called *analthes*, which were executed upon bark, and folded up in the same shape as books.*

* A specimen of the Lord's Prayer in the Maya language is here transcribed:—

Cayum yannech ti canoob, cilich cunabac a kaba, tac cokol a kahaulil utzcinabac, a nolah ti luum baix, te ti caane sa ca zamalkin, uah toon helelach, zatex ix czipil bay czazic, u zipil uh ziplob toone maix, a uilic e lubul, ti tuntabale, hanuca lukezon, ichil lobil. Amen.

Waldeck says, and a residence of several years gives weight to his impressions, that the Maya now spoken partakes very little of the ancient language of the country; more especially in the neighborhood of large towns and cities. The continued intercourse that has existed between the Indians and Spaniards, since the conquest, has Castilianized their idiom to such an extent, that the original is nearly lost to those who are now held in vassalage. The affinity observable between the Maya and Tchole dialects proves them to be a complete medley; and that this mixture occurred at an early period, he was convinced from the proofs he held in his own possession of the ancient idioms. For instance, in referring to his vocabulary, he finds that those words ending in *un*, in the Tchole *tulum*, (a circle,) are *tulun*. The *x* has the sound of *ch* in *church*. The Mayas are indebted to Francis Gabriel Bonaventure, author of a work published in 1560, called *Arte del Idioma Maya;* and to R. P. F. Pedro Beltran, who wrote in 1746,* two Franciscan monks, for this style of pro-

* It is my purpose to give a more extended discussion of the Maya language in a subsequent chapter. I was so fortunate as to procure from an Indian in the interior of Yucatan the only copy I have ever seen of R. P. L. Beltran's Grammar of this language, which is mentioned in the text. It is entitled, "Arte de el Idioma Maya, Reducido á Succinctas Reglas y Semi Lexicon Yucateco, por el R. P. F. Pedro Beltran, de Santa Rosa Maria, ex-Custodio, Lector que sue de Philosophia y Theologia, Revisor del Sto. Oficio, é hijo de esta Sta. Recoleccion Franciscana de Merida. Formólo y Dictólo sienda Maestro de Lengua Maya en el Convento Capitular de N. S. P. S. Francisco, de dicha Ciudad. Año de 1742, Yolo Dedica á la Gloriosa Indiana Santa Rosa Maria de Lima, con licencia: en Mexico, por la Venda de D. Joseph Bernardo de Hogal. Año de 1746."

nunciation. Waldeck affirms, that the language now spoken in Yucatan is not that for which those authors laid down the principles.

It appears that these people had no written language other than their hieroglyphics. The idioms now used were put into their present shape by their conquerors, from sounds representing things, gathered from the lips of the Indians. Definitions of their figurative writing, so far as it can be ascertained, might lead to more satisfactory results. They might serve as guides to some knowledge of a race, which evidently practised the useful and the ornamental arts; but which probably had emigrated to this hemisphere previous to the invention of letters.

The Maya dialect is very barren of expression; and, to a stranger, difficult of pronunciation. The same word often conveys different meanings, from the peculiar manner of sounding it. In fact, to speak it well, requires careful study, and an untiring practice. Under these obstructions, it would take a long time to become so familiarized to the tongue, as to be able to communicate with that people in a way to discover any of those traditions that may yet lurk among them. But, after all, they are like an exhausted mine; the metal which the curious seek has been extracted; and it need only be sought for in those regions where the soil has never been disturbed.

The dress of the Indian is of the simplest kind. His food principally consists of corn; which is prepared by parboiling, and crushing on a stone by

means of a roller. When ready, it is made into balls; and, after being mixed with water, it is ready to be eaten. Corn is broken in the same way, and made into cakes called tortillas, which are the favorite food of all classes of society in this province. The wages for Indian service are from one to four dollars per month; the largest portion of which, in very many cases, is expended for candles and other offerings to their chosen saint. In general these Indians are extremely mild and inoffensive. Drinking is their most decided vice; but even this, as we have already remarked, cannot be called a prevailing one. They are a listless rather than indolent race, and never "think for the morrow." They have quite an amiable expression in their countenances, and their mode of conversation is pleasing. Their features remind one of those of the Asiatic more than of any other. Their stature is short and thick-set, having but little resemblance to that of the North American Indian. We looked in vain for their pastimes — they have none, except those connected with the church. They seldom dance or sing. They are wholly under the surveillance of the priests, and are the most zealous devotees to their rites and ceremonies. Their hours of leisure are passed in their hammocks, or else in silently squatting about the corners of the streets. Though they wear the *outside* show of freedom, they have not even as much liberty as the most abject vassal of the middle ages. They are literally degraded to the position of serfs. They are always in debt, and are consequently at the mercy of their

creditors, who, by the law of the country, have a lien upon their services until their debts are cancelled. This, together with the absence of nearly all the ordinary encouragements to exertion, common in a colder climate, and among a more progressive people, conspires to keep the Indian Yucatecos in a state of listless bondage, which they endure without a murmur, and we may add, from our own observation, without much positive suffering. Legalized slavery, as it is well known, does not exist in any part of Mexico.

A YUCATECO INDIAN'S HOUSE.

CHAPTER IV

Preparations for the Interior—Outfit, &c.—The Indian Boy—Departure from Merida—Arrival at Tixcoco—Calcachen—A Feast-day—Isamal at a distance—Arrival there—Our Palace—A Procession—Ancient Mounds—The Church—A striking Indian—Wrong Impressions—Tuncax—A Dilemma—Philosophy of the Road-side—A Dinner—Visit to a Curate—A Touch of Comfort—Mail Carrier—Sitax—An Indian Alcalde—Tinum—An Allusion—Valladolid—A Mistake rectified in time.

THE varying and unsatisfactory accounts which I had received of the interior of Yucatan, had awakened in me an irresistible desire to explore it, although I tried in vain to define to myself the cause of my curiosity. Partly through a desire of novelty, and partly for the want of a more definite purpose, I resolved to invade those unexplored regions which had not yet found a corner in our geographies, nor even been reached by the all-pervading spirit of traffic. As soon as I had resolved, I addressed myself to the preparation of my outfit; in which, despite the ignorance and indolence of my Mexican aids, I was ultimately successful.

To some future traveller, it may be interesting to know the nature of my preparation.

In the first place, then, I provided myself with an *over-all* shirt, (pockets made to order,) Mexican rid-

ing-trousers, and palm-leaf hat. In addition to these, were a hammock and a striped blanket; the latter article *Americanized* by ornamental stars, representing the emblems of my country, in white, red, and blue; under which one could sleep, fight, or negotiate, as circumstances might require. Of weapons, defensive and conciliatory, there were a double-barrelled gun, an Indian knife, and rather a limited amount of the smallest Spanish coin. The Indian and the Bowie knife are very similar in weight and shape. The former is an indispensable accompaniment upon a journey through this peninsula. It may be seen that, if driven to the wall, a very tolerable show of defence might have been made.

The cooking arrangements consisted of tin cups and pans, salt, and loco-foco matches. My philosophical and mathematical instruments were a memorandum book, an ordinary lead pencil, and a pocket compass! The instruments and dress were intrusted to no one but myself—the latter enveloped my person, while the former occupied those invaluable shirt-pockets, of which I claim to be the original inventor. To the Indian boy José, (pronounced Hosay,) whom I hired as a servant to accompany me, and who will be hereafter better known to my readers, was intrusted the other portion of my luggage.

The boy, to whom allusion has just been made, was decidedly genteel in his appearance. Though he has been termed a boy, he is of the kind who, among the Irish, never become men until they are

married. He was about five-and-twenty years of age. His mother and sisters thought the world of him, and well they might; for he was most worthy of their affections. Both his physical and mental powers were very symmetrical. He was active, industrious, and faithful. If he had any fault, perhaps it was in being too amorous. I do not feel disposed, however, to quarrel with a constitutional infirmity.

I left the agreeable residence of Doña Michaelé, in company with my *fidus Achates*, on the twenty-ninth of January, on one of the most lovely mornings that the eye of God ever looked out upon to bless.

Our route was eastward, towards Valladolid. The road was wide, and in excellent condition, being one of the principal thoroughfares. This road is under the superintendence of government; and the expenses of its repairs are defrayed by a tax, similar to the road-tax usually levied in the United States.

At ten o'clock we arrived at the town of Tixcoco, and rode up to the *Casa-real;* which belongs to a class of houses set apart by the municipal authorities of every town for the accommodation of travellers. They are the substitutes for public houses; a convenience almost unknown to the country.

The Casa-real is also the receptacle for the public property of the place—such as implements of labor, punishment, &c.—consisting of crowbars, handcuffs, wooden scale-beams, and drums, staffs of the alcaldes, &c.

These accommodations and depositories are in

charge of some six or eight Indians, who are drafted to serve one year, under the direction of the alcaldes, who represent aldermen in the judicial capacity. These Indians also attend upon the wants of strangers, and depend wholly upon the small pittances they receive for their support. It is almost needless to add, what follows necessarily from the tenure of their offices, that they are idle, negligent, and without enterprise.

At a quarter before eleven I took breakfast, which had been brought from some neighboring house. It was composed of eggs, tortillas, and frejoles. The tortillas are a kind of corn-cakes, and constitute the principal bread of the country. Frejoles are small black beans, in general use in all the provinces of Mexico, and occupy the same elevated rank in the domestic economy of that nation that the potato does in Ireland. To complete the morning's repast, a calabash of *maza* was added. This is a drink prepared with corn, and is usually drunk by the natives in the place of tea and coffee.

The town of Tixcoco is ornamented with a large church, and the appurtenances thereto usually belonging in Catholic countries; but the dwellings, generally, are mere Indian huts, of mud walls and thatched roofs.

At three o'clock, after the heat of the day, we again started upon our route; and at six, rode up to the Casa-real of Calcachen, where we stopped during the night. The best room in the house was placed at our disposal. The corners of the apart-

ment proved that it had been swept; for the collections of months still remained there, a *standing* evidence of the fact.

The Casa-real, according to universal custom, fronts upon a public square; where great preparations were at this time making to celebrate some one of the religious festivals on the following Monday. An amphitheatre was erected, formed of poles, having a row of seats overlooking the arena, where bull-fights were to take place. In the evening, in anticipation of the festival, guns were discharged, and a display of fireworks took place from the roof of the church. The Indians, on these occasions, like our juvenile patriots previous to the fourth of July, usually anticipate the sport of the festal day some forty-eight hours or more before it arrives.

Next morning (Sunday) I was awakened before daylight by the noise of the natives, who, as usual, could not restrain their impatience for the arrival of their day of rejoicing. Wooden drums and horns were brought in requisition; and, at *sun-rise*, rockets were being discharged from the church. The bells were rung, the crowd entered the building, and quiet was restored.

Preparatory to cleansing our guns, previous to our departure from this town, they were discharged. This was understood by the Indians to be a complimentary salute to their saint, and they crowded around me, to my great annoyance, insisting that I should remain with them until the end of the feast. Flattering as was this invitation, which, at one time,

I thought I should be compelled to accept, I succeeded in declining without giving offence. Bidding them adieu, we saddled our horses, and were once more upon the road. After passing through two small Indian towns of little notoriety, we arrived at Isamal at noon.

The road continued to be good; and four miles distant, the church could be seen, throwing the shadows of its massive walls over the surrounding objects.

On arriving at the Casa-real, it was found to be deplorably filthy and uncomfortable; to which I was in no condition of mind or body to submit. I went in quest of the Colonel of the town, whom I found to be a quondam friend, and an old housemate at Doña Michaelé's, in Merida, and that he had been recently appointed to this station. From the natural politeness of this gentleman, I was guarantied a kind reception, and such good quarters were provided as to make me feel quite at home; as all will be prepared to believe, when they know of the accommodations.

We were the sole-proprietors of a lordly mansion, with a retinue of Indians to attend our bidding. The structure which we inhabited occupies one side of a large square, and is raised upon strong and well-built arches of about twelve feet, supporting the long ranges of halls, rooms, and pillared corridors, of easy access by steps leading off at different sections. The whole was quite imposing in its appearance, and not the less attractive for having been re-

cently cleansed and whitewashed. This building was used for public offices in Isamal's better days. I occupied the south-eastern angle of the mansion, looking out upon the square and market-place. The scene without, however, was not very fascinating. A few Indian women only were to be observed, selling or carrying meats and vegetables; and mules browsing over the grounds.

Sunday evening was being observed here by a long procession from one of the churches, composed of priests, and upwards of four hundred Indian girls, clad in plain white cotton dresses, each carrying a lighted candle. It was a beautiful and even an imposing sight. In this procession was carried a figure of the Virgin, surrounded by all the symbols of the church, upon a stage preceded by music, and heralded with occasional displays of fire-works.

In the morning, at an early hour, I visited the suburbs of the town, where I observed a number of mounds, the highest of which I judged to be from fifty to sixty feet, and which I ascended. The sides were very precipitous, and covered with loose stones. I was compelled to pull myself up by the aid of the bushes that overgrew the surface.

Before reaching the summit, and about two-thirds of the way from the base, is a square platform of about two acres in extent, in the centre of which is a well, partially filled in with stones, and more or less overgrown with vegetation. This dilapidation and decay had evidently been the work of centuries.

From the top of this mound there was a fine pros-

pect. The view of the town, with its elevated church, and the flat-roofed, Moorish-looking houses, with the trees of the tropics interspersed, and the tall cocoa, varying the surface of the extended country in the distance, presented a rural scene rarely to be met with in this country.

The plane surface of the land around these elevations, precludes the supposition that they are natural formations. Their origin and purpose can only be surmised. Probably they were fortifications—perhaps look-out places:—

> "An observatory, from whence to overlook
> The surrounding world at one broad glance,
> And view their wily foes."

Be this as it may, I felt awed when I looked upon them. I could not but feel that they established a sort of parenthetic connexion between myself and elder ages, and a strange people who had customs now unknown, and of whom history has preserved no better memorials than the indistinct yet eloquent piles of stone and earth before me.

After our breakfast, I called at the house of the curate, but he was absent; asserting the prerogative of the traveller, I thereupon introduced myself to the priest in charge, and informed him that I was a stranger, and should not be ungrateful for any attentions that might be bestowed upon me in that character. His reception was rather cool; but, as my object was to obtain information, I affected not to notice it. After some trivial delays, I was enabled to visit the church which had so struck my eye as I

approached the city, and which I was desirous of seeing. It is situated in the centre of the city, upon an artificial elevation, which once, no doubt, was the site of some important structure of the ancient people who formerly inhabited this province. It was probably destroyed to make room for a monastery—the ruins of which (the church which forms a part of it being preserved) cover some acres of land.

The church was filled with rude carving, and with still more rude and incomprehensible paintings. Within the walls, which encompass the whole of the grounds, is a square that once must have been a magnificent place, but which is now totally neglected. It has on three sides a double row of pillars, forming a beautiful promenade, from which the country, as far as the eye can reach, is overlooked.

The priest who conducted me over the premises, seemed to know nothing of the church in which he officiated, and even less, if possible, of the city and its environs, whence came the patronage on which he subsisted. The Latin inscription upon the builder's tablet was incomprehensible to him; but it is no more than justice to say, that he was evidently chagrined by the ignorance which he had been forced to exhibit. He conducted me to the turret, and pointed out the clock for my inspection; it was a rare piece of mechanism; but the most striking part of it was a *live* Indian stationed beside it, to strike the hours.

The towns throughout this portion of the interior are well laid out, and the houses well built; every

thing looks as though they might be inhabited by a stirring people. Arriving in one of them at the close of the day, the stranger is led to attribute the pervading quiet to that particular time; in the morning he would think the same; but, at morning, noon, and night, the same composing monotony reigns, and all days, (those of the feasts excepted,) and all places, are alike. A listless apathy seems to hang around them — a pervading stillness and inactivity, which are painful to observe.

The principal stores are kept by the whites, who, in the ratio of population, are to the Indians, about as one to six. Their stock comprises all descriptions of goods required by the inhabitants; among which the article of distilled liquors is the most prominent — the demand for which, I observed, increased, as I advanced into the interior.

The Indian of the town clock has this moment struck *one;* the stores are closed, and the streets deserted. The whole of the population, excepting a few straggling natives, are in their hammocks. Midnight is on us in pantomime, without its darkness. In fifteen minutes more, all Yucatan, literally, may be said to be asleep — even my José now is looking at me with a drowsy eye, and wondering, no doubt, why I do not follow the example. The climate is really enervating, and I have determined to swing a while, if it be only to learn not to condemn the habits of others.

On the following morning we left Isamal, stopping occasionally upon the road-side, to examine the so-

natos which lay in our route. These are large wells, which apparently have been formed by convulsions of Nature, in the midst of silicious and calcareous rocks. They contain a never failing supply of good water, and are a rendezvous of Indians, and halting-places for the muleteers, who usually are found taking their refreshments there. The calabash of Maza was always tendered to us with unrestrained hospitality, and we were almost uniformly asked to partake of their other provisions. Sharing the food of these humble wayfarers is an unfailing guarantee of their good-will, and to decline, if not construed as an offence, would certainly wound their sensibility.

I frequently had occasion to observe the tact that José possessed of making himself agreeable to those we met upon the road, and was often reminded of my good fortune in having secured his valuable services.

Parting from our transient friends, we hurried on in a vain effort to escape a violent shower which threatened us, and which overtook us in time to drench us thoroughly before we got refuge, at noon, in the Casa-real at Tuncax.

It is too late for me to expect any credit for remarking the mutability of all human affairs; but I was reminded of the fact to-day with all the force of a new revelation. But this morning I was quartered like a prince, with a palace for a dwelling, and a cacique's retinue to obey my bidding; and now, there is not an Indian so poor as to do me reverence. The floor of the Casa-real into which fate had cast

me was not entirely covered with water. The hammock swung clear of the mud. There evidently had been a roof over head, and my situation would have been positively worse in the streets. Comparatively, then, I was comfortable. The rain too had almost ceased; the Indians were coming in, and the prospects of a dinner were brightening. Across the square stood the church, with its heavy walls blackened with the sun and the rain, with its gabled front, and pigeon-holed apex, and its trio of bells. By its side stood the house of the curate, with its low sides, and high though dilapidated thatched roof. There were some half dozen stores scattered about, and a few stone buildings, no doubt inhabited by the whites; the rest of the town, as usual, is made of Indian huts.

The dinner came, and it satisfied me that none can appreciate the importance of a meal, except those who have tried it after a day's riding and fasting in a country like this. After a hearty repast of tortillas and frejoles, the weather was consulted, with a view of continuing our journey; but the result was not flattering. The fact was much clearer than the sky, that we were to remain here during the night, and there was no friendly Colonel within reach to rescue me from my lodgings. But it struck me that there must be some resource. The curate appeared to be the only chance, so to his house I wended my way, and entered with the customary "Ave Maria" upon my lips. He was swinging in his hammock. I introduced myself to him at once; described

the deplorable state of the Casa-real, and solicited his influence in obtaining us more comfortable quarters. He received me very kindly, and promised to do all in his power to make me comfortable; and right well he kept his word. A bottle of "Abenaro," a peculiar liquor of the country, and its accompaniment of cigars, were speedily sent for; and, in much less time than it requires to partake of either, I discovered that I was at home, at the house of my friend, the curate of Tuncax.

A long and animated conversation followed, which, I only recollect, was poorly understood by either, in consequence of the small amount of words which we comprehended in common. It was, mainly, of a political cast; politics being the subject in which he appeared to take most interest.

The curate was a young man, who, compared with many of his order in the country, had devoted much time to study. He has possessed the curacy for the last four years; but, if one may draw conclusions from things around, it is not a very lucrative situation.

Everything in the vicinity indicated extreme poverty; and I felt some embarrassment in asking to see his church and its nakedness. This, however, was happily obviated by a polite invitation, on his part, to conduct me through it. So, putting on his black velvet and silk, and mounting a curious high-peaked hat, and taking his telescope in his hand, he led the way over the broken stone floors, and along the dark damp halls, to the edifice.

As we entered, he remarked that it was poor. Indeed, that was plainly impressed upon everything in and about it. It had not even cleanliness and order to relieve its appearance. We passed through it, and ascended, by a flight of stone steps on the outside, to the roof, where, by the aid of the telescope, we had a fine view of the surrounding country.

On returning, my kind host made such immediate and complete arrangements for our accommodation, as guarantied to my *ménage* not only comfort, but some degree of splendor. On reaching the house that had been made ready for our reception, my friend, the curate, informed me that it was mine, and desired me to call for whatever I wished. The saddlebags and hammock were sent for, and everything was soon in a comfortable condition. The table was supplied with refreshments, and ornamented with large earthen cups of cool water, on the surface of which full-blown red roses were floating. The garden attached to my house, which I supposed, of course, was included in the gift, was fragrant with ripe oranges, and other delicious fruits. Besides all these, a whole troop of Indians were in attendance, to await my behests. There stands the Casa-real, our deserted hovel, just across the way. These sudden changes absolutely require nerve.

Between the kindness of the curate, the company of a civil dignitary of the town, and two other citizens, as guests, and a supper, which, I flatter myself, I was fully prepared to appreciate, served up with the unusual luxury of knives and forks, I contrived

to pass one of the most agreeable evenings that I had enjoyed since my departure from home.

At three o'clock on the following morning, we made ready to leave. The church was already lighted up, and the worthy curate at his post. At four we were in our saddles, and were soon making our way upon the road. The sky was clear and bright. The moon was half gone, throwing a sombre light upon all things around us. The green bushes by the road-side looked black; and the bleached wood of the rude crosses, erected at the pathway entrances to the haciendas, appeared forlorn and startling.

We met with but one living thing upon the road, and that was the mail-carrier. Neither the trampling of horses, nor the sound of horn, heralded his approach; but the clamping sounds of his wooden sandals, as they struck upon the stony road, gave us the first notice that he was near. The mail was contained in a small box, held by a strap, which passed round the head of the carrier, who was an Indian.

At eight o'clock we arrived at Sitax, the prettiest town we had seen; where we stopped for breakfast and to obtain a horse, that of José having given out. As I strolled about the place, I noticed a more marked appearance of order than was generally to be seen in the other towns. At the house of an old Indian I saw an earthen vase, something of the Etruscan shape, which he told me had been found among some of the ancient ruins in this province. He used it as an incense-burner; and refused to sell, or even to

set a price upon it. Money is not omnipotent with these Indians, as in most civilized countries; and this prostration of the divinity almost startled me.

On returning to the Casa-real, breakfast and an alcalde were sent for. Both came. The former consisted of the almost undeviating course — eggs, tortillas, and frejoles; and the latter, of a strapping big Indian, barefooted, bearing his staff of office, and accompanied by one of his aids. My wants were soon explained; and he immediately despatched his aid, who brought an Indian that agreed to carry José, and luggage to Valladolid, eight leagues, for the sum of half a dollar. The bargain was concluded, and the money paid in advance, as is always customary among the natives. This demand must be complied with uniformly. Even the women who wash clothes require a *medio* in advance, to buy soap.

The luggage was lashed to the back of a mule, and we were again upon the road. Several stops were made by the way, to visit haciendas and ranchos, (grain and cattle farms;) but little of interest occurred upon our journey. We arrived at the town of Tinum at two o'clock. The sun being excessively hot, we waited till evening. The Casa-real in this, as in other towns of the province, was the loafering-place of the Indians. They were squatted about in the shade, silent and motionless, killing time to the best of their abilities. At four o'clock we again betook ourselves to the road, and passing through several inconsiderable Indian towns, arrived

at Valladolid at dusk on the fourth day of February, distance one hundred and twenty miles from Merida.

For the greater part of the way from Isamal to this city, the road is level, though somewhat rough. As we drew near to Valladolid, gentle risings were more common at intervals, particularly near the sonatos. Although this road commences at the capital, and leads through all the principal cities and towns of the interior, it is but little travelled. No wheel carriages, of any description, were seen. Transportation is mostly effected by mules—perhaps I should say, by Indians; many of whom were met upon the road with heavy packages secured upon their backs, and held by plaited ropes passed around the head in the usual manner.

After a fatiguing day's journey, we reined up in the square of the city, before the Casa-real, and dismounted. I discovered, however, before entering, that it was full; and, upon inquiry, ascertained that it was occupied by prisoners, who were detained there while their usual place was undergoing repairs. This sort of association not being altogether agreeable to me, we remounted, and went in quest of a countryman, who I heard was residing here. Successful, after much inquiry, in finding him, my name, the object of my visit to Valladolid, &c., were all communicated to him in due form; but somehow Mr. Stephens, who had been daily expected here for the last two months, had got into the head of my new acquaintance, as I afterwards learned, and, in his confusion, he had mistaken me for that celebrated

traveller, and led me, without my being aware of the misconception, to the house of a friend who had been long advised of that gentleman's approach. I was met by the polite and hospitable owner of the house, and invited to walk in, while orders were given to have care taken of the horses. But, mistrusting that all was not right, I halted at the threshold, and requested a parley. It was only with a considerable degree of earnestness that I was enabled to convince him that I was neither Mr. Stephens nor the *Medico*, (alluding, probably, to Dr. Cabot, one of the companions of Mr. Stephens.) The amiable lady and her daughter were quite amused at the incident, and seemed rather to enjoy my embarrassment than otherwise. I drew off, and followed my countryman to his quarters, where I was kindly entertained for the night. This was rather a laughable circumstance; but I congratulated myself that we came to an understanding in time to prevent its becoming ludicrous.

A ROAD SIDE.

CHAPTER V.

Festival of the Purification — A Factory Discovered — New Quarters — Appearance of Public Buildings — Church — Singular Display of Taste — Population and Health — The Town — Its Suburbs — Monastic Ruins — Remarkable Sonato — Amusements — The Riband Dance — The Market Place — Cotton — Ancient Ruins — Difficulties of Strangers — A Norther — Kaua — The Churlish Curate — End of a Feast — The Route — Approach to Chi-Chen — A Glimpse of the Ruins.

TRAVELLING gear was now thrown aside, the toilet consulted, and in a few moments I was in a procession in honor of the "Purification of the Holy Virgin," with head uncovered, as devout a Catholic as could be met within the precincts of the Vatican, or, at least, within the congregation about me, if I might be permitted to judge from the appendix to their devotional exercises on the present occasion. The men, women, and children, as soon as they had concluded these ceremonies here, started in a body, with a revolting precipitation, to the gaming tables, which had been set forth in the ruins of an old convent adjoining the sanctuary where the procession had just been dissolved! Here were found all classes of society, male and female. The highest ecclesiastical and civil dignitaries were there, hob and nob, with the most common of the multitude. The ladies generally interested themselves in the games, and some-

times played deep. They were, most of them, good-looking, and tastefully dressed; but they quite stared me out of countenance. I doubtless appeared as strange to them, as they and their customs did to me. I contrived, however, to survive their scrutiny. After lounging about the long corridors where the company was assembled, observing and being observed for two hours, and feeling fatigued, not only with the scenes around, but with the day's ride, I hastened to my quarters, and the quiet of the pillow.

Awaking at an early hour in the morning, the sounds of a steam-engine greeted my ear. No music ever thrilled me with so much delight. For a moment I dreamed that I was in the land of the workingman, and within the charmed circle of his ministrations. On looking out, however, in the direction whence the noise proceeded, I noticed a cotton factory in a neighboring street. I need not say that it became the very first object of my curiosity.

The proprietor of this establishment, to whom I had letters, is a gentleman of the old school, well informed and communicative; and, withal, a liberal man. He was a native of Spain; in his early years was attached to the navy of that kingdom; and, among other things in his eventful life, was at the battle of Trafalgar. Since he has resided in Yucatan he has been its governor, and held many other high and responsible stations, and is now esteemed one of its most valuable citizens. His attentions to me, during my stay, were as real as they were unremitting. He informed me that the factory was estab-

lished by himself, in connexion with others, in 1834. The engine, looms, &c., were brought from New-York, and transported across the country, from the port of Sisal to this place, in wagons imported for the purpose. It was an arduous as well as a very expensive undertaking. The proprietor has overcome many obstacles which he had to encounter at the commencement of his enterprise, and is now successfully established, with a very fair business. His was the first, and is still the only one in the country. I found it in complete order, and conducted upon the most liberal scale, yielding to those employed more than double the amount of wages usually paid in this state. The building was of the most durable stone; two stories high, forty-five by seventy-five feet, and with an arched roof, supported by strong butments. The style of the arched roof is common to this country, owing to the absence of large timber. The ground it occupies, including the out-houses, is about one hundred and fifty by two hundred feet. The first floor contains the looms, twenty in number; and the second, a thousand spindles, with a picker and gin. It turns out four hundred yards of cloth per day, of a uniform medium quality, of a strong texture, which is considered superior to either the American or the English of the same class. It employs fifty men, principally of the half-breeds, who are paid by the piece. The cost of the building and machinery was upwards of forty thousand dollars.

The traveller, in this country, is often subjected to the unpleasant necessity of thrusting himself upon

the civility of the inhabitants of the towns he visits, owing to the almost total absence of public houses, and the miserable condition of many of the Casa-reals; but foreign visiters are seldom here, so that the kindnesses I have thus far experienced, appear to be tendered with the utmost cheerfulness. The people do not feel the presence of a guest to be irksome; and, whatever may be said of their characters, the want of hospitality to strangers cannot be charged against them.

The kind friend to whom I have alluded, procured for me comfortable quarters in an unoccupied building in the square, of which I at once took possession. It is situated in front of the church, and adjoins the curate's house, which is tenanted by himself and his three or four *femmes propres à tout*, and fifteen or sixteen children, who are taught to call him father.

The square itself is a fine one; or, rather, there is room for a fine one; but, like most other fine squares in the towns I have visited, is destitute of style or decoration. The public buildings, which are the town-house, of two stories, with low pillared arches, and the church, are all that strike the eye of the stranger; the others are comprised of some few one-story dwelling houses and stores, with huge doors and barred windows, occupied by citizens and small dealers. The area of this square serves as a market-place, and a pasture for mules to graze!

The church presents a neat appearance from without, and is one of the very handsomest buildings I had seen in the country. It is of stone, covered with

a yellow stucco. The door lintels and arches are of carved stone; it has two square turrets, in good keeping, and is set off with a well-proportioned dome. There are some irregularities, however; but these are not seen, except from particular points of observation. The interior of this, as of most of the churches in the province, is in a bad condition; its decorations are in barbarous taste, and its shrines defaced. Its exterior impresses one with an idea of its vastness; but, on entering, it appears diminutive. This is owing to the great depth of the walls, of this and similar buildings throughout Yucatan, which are frequently from twelve to fifteen feet thick. At the entrance is a shrine, representing our Saviour bearing his cross, assisted by the figure of a man in tight shorts, of the old English style, and coat to match. The hat worn by the adjutant was not absolutely bad, but in shocking bad taste. It was a silk imitation beaver; being one of those high, bell-crowned narrow-rims, of the style worn some fifteen or twenty years ago. This was probably intended for "Simon of Cyrene." The incumbent of this curacy has a large income, which, it is said, he has enjoyed for many years, without having ever entered the walls of his church.

The number of inhabitants of Valladolid and its suburbs, is estimated at about fifteen thousand. The place is noted throughout the peninsula for the salubrity of its climate; and no better evidence need be adduced, than the simple fact of there not being a single doctor or apothecary in the whole district. Citizens from other parts of the province, less fa-

vored, come here to recruit and to recover their health.

The streets are well laid out, and clean; but grass grows in the centre of the most frequented. The same style of building is observed here as in other parts of this country that I have visited. The houses are principally of one story, flat roofs, large doors, and barred windows; with court-yards, stone and mortar floors, &c. Many large houses in the chief streets, within sight of the square, were fast going to decay.

There are no societies, or private or public places of instruction or amusement. This is singular, when it is considered that the native inhabitants speak of their *noble* city, as they term it, with great pride, and call themselves the *élite* of Yucatan. This point I am not prepared to dispute. It is certain, however, that the city, or its society, presents few evidences of the schoolmaster having been abroad among them.

The suburbs, or "barrios" as they are locally called, are five in number; each having a church and its attendant priest. The population, with a very few exceptions, is composed of poor Indians, the major part of whom, of both sexes, go habitually *in puris naturalibus*, or nearly so; living in mean huts, and supporting large and expensive churches; while they themselves appear to be contented to subsist alone upon corn and water.

In the barrio Sisal is the ruin of an old convent. Its crumbling walls tell of changes that are slowly developing themselves in the civilized world. It was an immense structure in its time, covering a space

of two acres, enclosed within a high stone wall; and remains a painful monument of the mighty power which the order of Loyola, its original proprietors, once exercised upon the destinies of this country. All that is now left is the church, and the house of the priest. The cloisters, corridors, and squares, are all fast going to pieces; and fragments of them are lying about in every direction. Its spacious halls are now the abode of the poor Indian, who aspires to a portion of the hallowed influence which is reputed to hang around its dilapidated walls. The crumbling turrets and blackened domes are covered with a wild vegetation, and have become a perch for the buzzard, and the hiding-place for loathsome reptiles. One of the wells connected with the monastery is dug through a solid rock to the depth of one hundred and fifty feet, when it opens upon a subterraneous river of pure water. In former times, a handsome temple was erected over it; the remains of a part of its dome still exist. There are not many pleasing associations connected with these places.

The other barrios have nothing of interest. They are thickly populated by the listless natives, who, as usual, live in their small huts, constructed with poles and mud. Nothing was to be observed like thrift or industry. They were the most wretched specimen of human beings that I saw in the country. The churches, too, like all things else around them, are growing old. Literally, every thing appears to be left here to take care of itself. The roads in the vicinity are narrow, broken, rocky pathways for mules.

During my walks about the city I came to a sonato, reputed to be the largest in the province, supposed to be a portion of a subterraneous river; and caused, as I judged, by some great convulsion of nature. It presents a fine spectacle, resembling the mouth of a cavern, with its overhanging rocks and broken fragments left or worn away into the shape of inverted cones. Evidently, it was once hidden; and when or how it effected an opening, no one hereabouts can tell. All that the Indian knows is, that it affords him an abundant and good supply of water. The average depth of the water is twelve fathoms; while the distance from its surface to the surface of the ground above, is full fifty feet. The well itself has no perceptible outlet, and is about fifty feet in circumference. The surrounding rocks are principally calcareous, with a silicious intermixture. These sonatos are held in superstitious reverence by the Indians. They are reputed to be the places where most of their religious legends had their origin.

The Indians and Mestizos here still hold on to some of the old customs and amusements of their forefathers, upon which they pride themselves. Among the latter, that of dancing appears to be most popular in Valladolid, and usually takes place every fair evening, during the festivals, in or near one of the squares. Around the place designated for the entertainment, as I frequently observed, were placed benches for the dancing-girls, who arrange themselves in a row, separated from the crowd. They are chosen in regular rotation, and led out to dance.

SONATO near VALLADOLID.

Their toilet was of the olden time, but it set off their plain features and low stature to good advantage. Their head-gear was a black silk hat, of the style usually worn by gentlemen, with gold and silver bands, intermixed with roses and long plumes of feathers; and their rich black hair, neatly braided, hung down the back, and almost swept the ground. The dress consisted of a loose white garment, suspended gracefully from the shoulders, ornamented at the top and bottom with various colored needlework, and white silk stockings and shoes—the whole beautiful and chaste. They danced with much skill and taste. The men wore shirts and trousers made of calico, with sash and blanket. The latter article is thrown over the shoulder, and carried with a grace which one looks for in vain out of Mexico. The sight was altogether enchanting; and I imagined for the moment that I beheld before me the royal abundance and Indian simplicity of the court of Montezuma.

The three days of masquerade before lent, (Ash-Wednesday,) commenced on Sunday, the sixth of February. The riband, or pole dance, among the masqueraders, excited the most attention. A pole, about twenty feet long, was raised perpendicularly, from the top of which were fastened fifteen or twenty pieces of wide, variously-colored ribands. Each dancer, laying hold of a piece and extending it, formed a wide circle around the pole. The dancing commenced at a given signal, all joining. They crossed each other with the greatest precision, and

in such order as to form a beautiful lattice or network with the ribands, until they were wound up. The figure then suddenly changes, and the ribands, by a reverse movement, are unwound. This they continue until they are tired. The evenings of the three days were finished by balls at the house of some one of the citizens, where the most respectable part of the population was to be seen.

The market-places of the interior, generally, present a singular appearance to the eye of a stranger. The sellers are principally Indians, squatted about upon the ground, with small pieces of meat laid out in piles, and vegetables displayed in the same manner, upon benches beside them, in the public square. The currency, of *cacao* seed, is also counted out in small parcels, ready to make change to customers. The market-place is vacated at an early hour in the morning by both customers and venders, to be occupied, for the remainder of the day, by turkey-buzzards and dogs; which are suffered to legislate upon, negotiate for, and try as best they may, any disputed claims which may arise to the property left behind by their predecessors of the morning.

The country in the vicinity of Valladolid is much broken and rocky, and carries unequivocal indications of earthquakes and convulsions. The soil is very thin, but good crops of corn are taken from it. The fruit-trees of the tropics are abundant, and yet no attention is paid to their cultivation, either for use or for ornament.

The cotton plantations, or rather the districts

where the material is raised that is consumed in the manufactory in this city, are to the north, and known as the "Tizimen district." The same spot is seldom cultivated for two successive seasons. After the crop is gathered, the ground is suffered to be overrun with weeds and brushwood; which, when years have elapsed, are cut down and burnt, and the field is re-planted. Cotton here is not in classification; it is gathered and sold in the seed, and ranges from ten to fifteen cents per pound. It is generally superior, both in texture and color; but the indolence of the natives, and other causes, will prevent the extensive cultivation of that article for many years to come.

I learned, during my sojourn here, that there were many interesting places, further to the east, worthy the attention of the stranger—ancient buildings, and even cities—some as far east as the island of Cozumel. I also heard of ruins in the neighborhood of Chi-Chen, which, for reasons that need not be mentioned, I concluded to visit first. The owner of this hacienda, which is situated about eleven leagues to the west-south-west from this city, resides here. Having learned my intentions, he not only very generously offered me the use of his house, which is near to the ruins, but sent his major-domo to have it prepared for my reception.

On the morning of the eighth of February, after again experiencing the instability and fickleness of the natives, and that apathy and indolence proverbially characteristic of them, I succeeded, through the aid of my friend, in securing a guide and horse

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to conduct us thither. The Indian, who is the traveller's sole reliance, as previously remarked, in all kinds of menial service, can hardly be induced to work, unless from the necessity of supplying his own immediate wants, or under the orders of the alcalde, to whom strangers are often obliged to apply for assistance in compelling these indolent people to assist them. In such a case, the aggrieved party enters his complaint to the alcalde, stating that he has endeavored to hire an Indian, but that he refuses. The Indian is then sent for, and his reasons for declining heard: if not satisfactory, and they seldom are, he is commanded to attend the traveller, and the amount of his compensation fixed at the time. The penalty for disobedience is imprisonment, which, however, is seldom incurred.

We were upon the road at an early hour, but had not proceeded far before we experienced "a norther" of rain and wind—a kind of tempest peculiar to these regions, and exceedingly annoying. We stopped at an Indian's hut for shelter; but the dilapidated state of the walls offered so insufficient a protection from the elements, that I soon concluded to make headway under their fury, and to endeavor to reach the town of Kaua, where we expected to find a good retreat. The ride over the slippery rocks was slow and hazardous, but at three o'clock we reached the long looked-for place, where we had pictured to ourselves so much happiness in the change of clothes and comfortable lodgings. How fallacious, sometimes, are our brightest anticipations! On arriving at the Casa-

real, (the traveller's first hope,) every thing was found to be comfortless and forbidding. Our clothes were drenched, and the storm continued unabated.

The curate was the next resort; he lived close by. So, dripping with the rain, and trembling with cold, we went to his house, and gave such a shivering knock, that it might have denoted our pitiable condition without the necessity of words to explain it. After some delay, a short, thick-set, gray-headed old man came to the door, inquiring, rather gruffly, what was wanted? A single glance might have told him; but we, however, verbally stated our situation, and requested his advice. All we could obtain from him in answer was, "Nadie, Nadie!"—with such an emphatic and significant shrug, that I was sure he had practised it all his life. I left as I had entered, rather coolly. Slightly scanning his room, however, I observed, in a corner, a table covered with broken pieces of cups, the floor filled with old chairs, books, &c., and dirt in abundance. I had little difficulty in believing the grapes were sour. I pocketed my ungracious reception as well as might be, and returned through the streets to the Casa-real, partly to see of what sort of people this *pious* churl, to whom I was a stranger, and who took me not in, was the Coryphe-us, and partly to get an idea of the topography of the place. I found my home had much improved by my absence. I was now in a state of mind to look at it with far greater satisfaction than when I left it. We built a huge fire upon the floor, warmed ourselves, and dried our clothes; and over our supper, that we had

just bought of the Indians, decided, that it was better to submit to the evils that we already had, than "to fly to others that we knew not of."

Only one white man was seen in the place, and it is questionable whether he were so all the way through. He was the curate, of whose tender mercies I had received so refreshing a specimen.

In my walk, I witnessed a scene which was calculated to excite both pity and disgust. In front of the church were collected some forty or fifty drunken Indians, with the log drum and other uncouth instruments, including their voices, making up with discordant and hideous noises a celebration of the last day of the masquerade. One of the prime actors in this revel eventually became so affected by the liquor he had drunk, that he became decidedly mad—striking about him and raving furiously. His companions were obliged to secure him by ropes, and have him carried to his hut.

By eight o'clock on the following day, I was mounted and on the route. The roads were somewhat more passable, though the same rocky surface, with occasional rises, was encountered. I observed one sugar-plantation on my way; the cane, which was then nearly ready to be cut, looked very well.

As I approached Chi-Chen, and while not more than four or five miles distant, I observed the roadside was strewn with columns, large hewn stones, &c., overgrown with bushes and long grass. On our arrival, at noon, we were most cordially received by the major-domo at the hacienda: the horses were

taken into good keeping, and I was conducted to quarters which had been prepared in anticipation of my coming. These were in the church near by, in that part which is known to us as the vestry-room; and a very comfortable room I found too for my purposes.

This church stands upon a rise of land that overlooks the country for a considerable distance around, embracing the hacienda, and, probably, the most remarkable ruins the world has ever known. I found the major-domo as unremitting in his attentions as if he had been made for me expressly. The eighty Indians attached to the hacienda, the house and all its contents, as he assured me, were mine. I ought to be comfortable and happy. This, and the surrounding attractions, offered every facility for repose. There never could be found a more delightful place for dreaming life away in a state of irresponsible vegetation than the one now presented to me. The climate—the example and behavior of Nature about me—almost tempted me to abandon myself to the enchantment of its charming indolence.

I cast my travelling equipments aside, and, delighted with the attentions showered upon me, and which I am happy to say were the harbingers of an unremitting series from my host, I proceeded to the house for breakfast. Entering through a well-formed arch, built of stone, smooth plastered, I passed into a large cattle-yard, which was divided into three parts by stone walls, (in this manner the whole premises were enclosed,) and ascended a small flight of steps that

were carried over a long and well-cemented watering-trough for the accommodation of cattle, which extended the whole length of the front. On reaching the corridor, the walls and floor presented to me a singular appearance. Here was an odd and startling figure—the god, perhaps, of a forgotten people; and there a beautiful rosette: and even beneath my feet were pieces of carved stone and hieroglyphics that seemed as though they were striving to make me understand the story of their wonderful beginning. Within reach of the eye were to be seen the fragments and ornaments of pillars that once, possibly, embellished the palace of a proud cacique, stuck into the rude wall of the poor Indian's hut! Lost in meditation, I was soliloquizing to myself upon the transitory nature of all human greatness, when I was suddenly aroused by stumbling over a huge—heap of beans! This brought me back at once to the world of reality, and to my welcome breakfast. This meal was served upon a clean stool; and, seated in a hammock, I made a hearty repast.

My house was one-story, built of stone from the ruins in the vicinity, with spacious corridors in front and rear. It had but four rooms, which served for an eating and sleeping room, granary, &c. At the side of the building was a deep well, to which the Indians and cattle look for their drink. The water is drawn up by means of buckets, attached by twigs to a plaited strap of the same material, passed around a cylinder, which is turned by a mule. In the revolutions, the buckets are emptied into reservoirs; and thence the water is

led off by conductors to the different places where it is required. A few vegetables were growing about the premises; but little or no cultivation was perceptible. Fruits of the tropics, here, as elsewhere in this province, grow in abundance. I proceeded to the ruins almost immediately after my arrival; but their description must be reserved for another chapter.

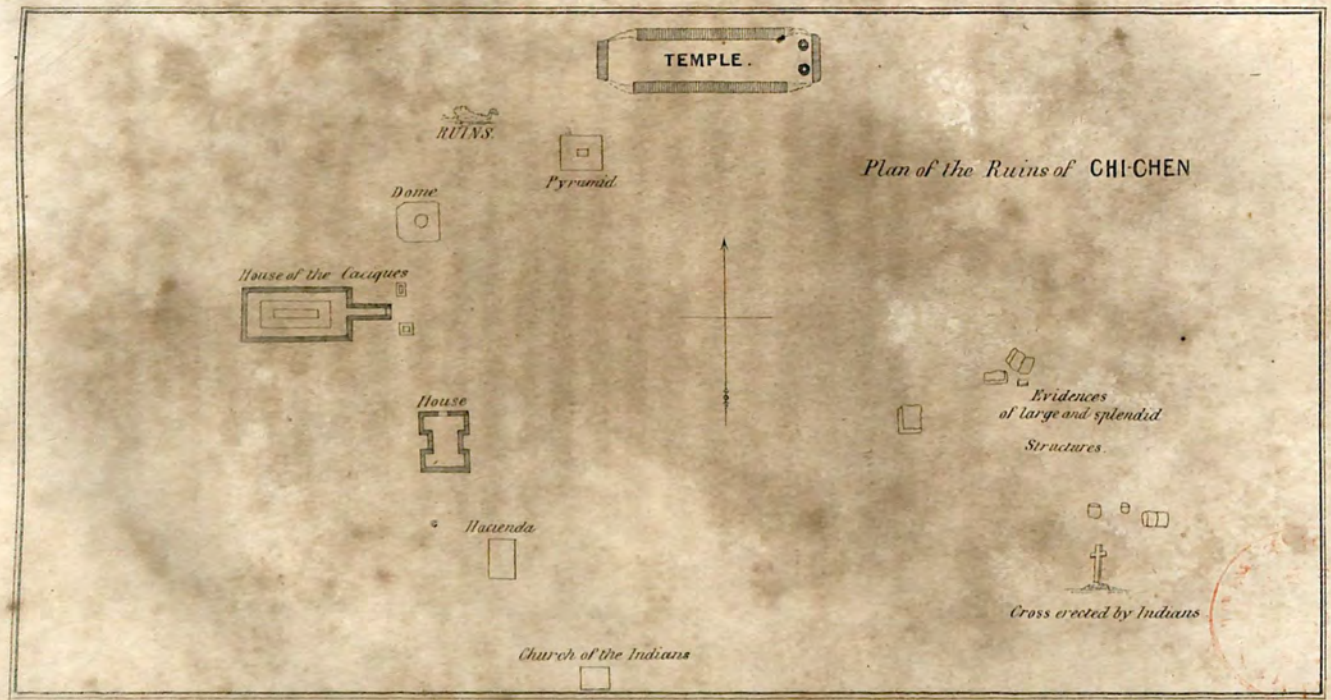
The favorable anticipations respecting the comforts of my quarters were fully confirmed. Though the furnishing was somewhat unique, still I found myself comfortably domiciliated. A huge stone altar stood at one extremity of the room, upon which rested a cross, with curiously painted devices of sculls, boxes, ladders, knives, cocks, temples, flags, &c., the whole capped with the expressive initials of INRI. On either side stood small boxes, containing dolls, representing saints, &c. In the corner of the room were sundry pieces of carved wood, exhibiting the figure of our Saviour crucified. The sides were filled up with tables and platforms, to carry the saints on, in the processions. Numerous wooden candlesticks were scattered about, hither and yond, intermingled with hammocks, riding equipments, &c.

CHAPTER VI.

A visit to the Ruins—Reflections—Indian Visiters—Detail of the Ruins of Chi-Chen—The Temple—The Pyramid—The Dome—The House of the Caciques—General Ruins—Mounds—Foundations—Characteristics of the Ruins—Materials and Manner of Building—The finish—Fresco paintings.

It was on the morning of the 10th of February that I directed my steps, for the first time, toward the ruins of the ancient city of Chi-Chen.* On arriving in the immediate neighborhood, I was compelled to cut my way through an almost impermeable thicket of under-brush, interlaced and bound together with strong tendrils and vines; in which labor I was assisted by my diligent aid and companion, José. I was finally enabled to effect a passage; and, in the course of a few hours, found myself in the presence of the ruins which I sought. For five days did I wander up and down among these crumbling monuments of a city which, I hazard little in saying, must have been one of the largest the world has ever seen. I beheld before me, for a circuit of many miles in diameter, the walls of palaces and

* Chi-Chen signifies, Mouth of a Well. "Itza," said to be the Maya name for one of the old possessors of these ruins, is sometimes added by the natives.


TEMPLE.
RUINS.
Pyramid
Dome
House of the Caciques
House
Hacienda
Church of the Indians
Plan of the Ruins of CHI-CHEN
Evidences
of large and splendid
Structures
Cross erected by Indians

temples and pyramids, more or less dilapidated. The earth was strewed, as far as the eye could distinguish, with columns, some broken and some nearly perfect, which seemed to have been planted there by the genius of desolation which presided over this awful solitude. Amid these solemn memorials of departed generations, who have died and left no marks but these, there were no indications of animated existence save from the bats, the lizards, and the reptiles which now and then emerged from the crevices of the tottering walls and crumbling stones that were strewed upon the ground at their base. No marks of human footsteps, no signs of previous visiters, were discernible; nor is there good reason to believe that any person, whose testimony of the fact has been given to the world, had ever before broken the silence which reigns over these sacred tombs of a departed civilization. As I looked about me and indulged in these reflections, I felt awed into perfect silence. To speak then, had been profane. A revelation from heaven could not have impressed me more profoundly with the solemnity of its communication, than I was now impressed on finding myself the first, probably, of the present generation of civilized men walking the streets of this once mighty city, and amid

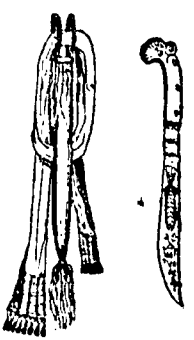
> "Those temples, palaces, and piles stupendous,
> Of which the very ruins are tremendous."

For a long time I was so distracted with the multitude of objects which crowded upon my mind, that I could take no note of them in detail. It was not

until some hours had elapsed, that my curiosity was sufficiently under control to enable me to examine them with any minuteness. The Indians for many leagues around, hearing of my arrival, came to visit me daily; but the object of my toil was quite beyond their comprehension. They watched my every motion, occasionally looking up to each other with an air of unfeigned astonishment; but whether to gather an explanation from the faces of their neighbors, or to express their contempt for my proceedings, I have permitted myself to remain in doubt up to this day. Of the builders or occupants of these edifices which were in ruins about them, they had not the slightest idea; nor did the question seem to have ever occurred to them before. After the most careful search, I could discover no traditions, no superstitions, nor legends of any kind. Time and foreign oppression had paralyzed, among this unfortunate people, those organs which have been ordained by the God of nations to transfer history into tradition. All communication with the past here seems to have been cut off. Nor did any allusion to their ancestry, or to the former occupants of these mighty palaces and monumental temples, produce the slightest thrill through the memories of even the oldest Indians in the vicinity. Defeated in my anticipations from this quarter, I addressed myself at once to the only course of procedure which was likely to give me any solution of the solemn mystery. I determined to devote myself to a careful examination of these ruins in detail.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RUINS OF CHI-CHEN.

My first study was made at the ruins of the TEMPLE.* These remains consist, as will be seen by reference to the engraving, of four distinct walls. I entered at an opening in the western angle, which I conceived to be the main entrance; and presumed, from the broken walls, ceilings, and pillars still standing, that the opposite end had been the location of the shrine or altar. The distance between these two extremes is four hundred and fifty feet. The walls stand upon an elevated foundation of about sixteen feet. Of the entrance, or western end, about one-half remains; the interior showing broken rooms, and ceilings not entirely defaced. The exterior is composed of large stones, beautifully hewn, and laid in fillet and moulding work. The opposite, or altar end, consists of similar walls, but has two sculptured pillars, much defaced by the falling ruins—six feet only remaining in view above them. These pillars measure about two feet in diameter. The walls are surrounded with masses of sculptured and hewn stone, broken columns, and ornaments, which had fallen from the walls themselves, and which are covered with a rank and luxuriant vegetation, and even with trees, through which I was obliged to cut my way with my Indian knife. In the rear

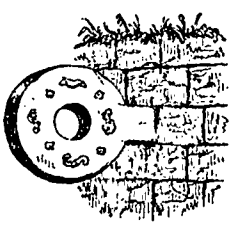


Indian knife and sheath.

* The names by which I have designated these ruins, are such as were suggested to me by their peculiar construction, and the purposes for which I supposed them to have been designed.

of the pillars are the remains of a room, the back ceilings only existing; sufficient, however, to show that they were of rare workmanship.

The southern, or right-hand wall, as you enter, is in the best state of preservation, the highest part of which, yet standing, is about fifty feet; where, also, the remains of rooms are still to be seen. The other parts, on either side, are about twenty-six feet high, two hundred and fifty long, and sixteen thick; and about one hundred and thirty apart. The interior, or inner surface of these walls, is quite perfect, finely



finished with smooth stone, cut uniformly in squares of about two feet. About the centre of these walls, on both sides, near the top, are placed stone rings, carved from an immense block, and inserted in the wall by a long shaft, and projecting from it about four feet. They measure about four feet in diameter, and two in thickness—the sides beautifully carved.

The extreme ends of the side-walls are about equidistant from those of the shrine and entrance. The space intervening is filled up with stones and rubbish of walls, showing a connexion in the form of a curve. In the space formed by these walls are piles of stones, evidently being a part of them; but there were not enough of them, however, to carry out the supposition that this vast temple had ever been enclosed. At the outer base of the southern wall are the remains of a room; one side of which, with the angular ceil-

THE TEMPLE.

CHI-CHEN RUINS.

ing, is quite perfect; measuring fourteen feet long and six wide The parts remaining are finished with sculptured blocks of stone of about one foot square, representing Indian figures with feather head-dresses, armed with bows and arrows, their noses ornamented with rings; carrying in one hand bows and arrows, and in the other a musical instrument similar to those that are now used by the Indians of the country. These figures were interspersed with animals resembling the crocodile. Near this room I found a square pillar, only five feet of which remained above the ruins. It was carved on all sides with Indian figures, as large as life, and apparently in warlike attitudes. Fragments of a similar kind were scattered about in the vicinity.

From this room, or base, I passed round, and ascended over vast piles of the crumbling ruins, pulling myself up by the branches of trees, with which they are covered, to the top of the wall; where I found a door-way, filled up with stones and rubbish, which I removed, and, after much labor, effected an entrance into a room measuring eight by twenty-four feet; the ceiling of which was of the acute-angled arch, and perfected by layers of flat stones. The walls were finely finished with square blocks of stone, which had been richly ornamented. Even yet the heads of Indians, with shields and lances, could be distinguished in the coloring.

The square pillars of the door-way are carved with Indians, flowers, borders, and spear-heads; all of which I judged to have once been colored. The lin-

tel, which supported the top, is of the zuporte* wood, beautifully carved, and in good preservation. One of the Indian head-dresses was composed of a cap and flowers.

Immediately in front of the door-way is a portion of a column, to which neither cap nor base was attached. It measured about three feet in diameter, with its whole surface sculptured; but it was so obliterated by time, that the lines could not be traced. Four feet of its length only could be discovered. It was, evidently, imbedded in the ruins to a great depth. Numerous blocks of square hewn stones, and others, variously and beautifully carved, were lying in confusion near this column.

Of the exterior of these walls, a sufficient portion still exists to show the fine and elaborate workmanship of the cornices and entablatures, though the latter are much broken and defaced. They are composed of immense blocks of stone, laid with the greatest regularity and precision, the façades of which are interspersed with flowers, borders, and animals.

From this portion of the ruins I cut my way, through a dense mass of trees and vegetation, to the eastern extremity of the walls, the top of which was much dilapidated, and obstructed with occasional piles of broken and hewn stone. On my return, I

* I found the wood of the zuporte-tree had been used exclusively in these buildings for lintels and thwart-beams, but for no other purpose. Upon several of the beams yet remaining, there were elaborate carvings. This wood is well known in this country for its remarkable durability and solidity.

Norman Del. Endicott, lith.

THE PYRAMID.

CHI-CHEN RUINS.

descended to, and walked along the outside base of the wall to the rear of the shrine, and over immense blocks of hewn and carved stone, some of which were, no doubt, the butments of altar walls; as similar blocks were near here appropriated to such purposes.

I returned by the outside of the northern wall. The whole distance was filled up with heaps of ruins, overgrown with trees and vines; through which I cleared my way with the greatest difficulty.

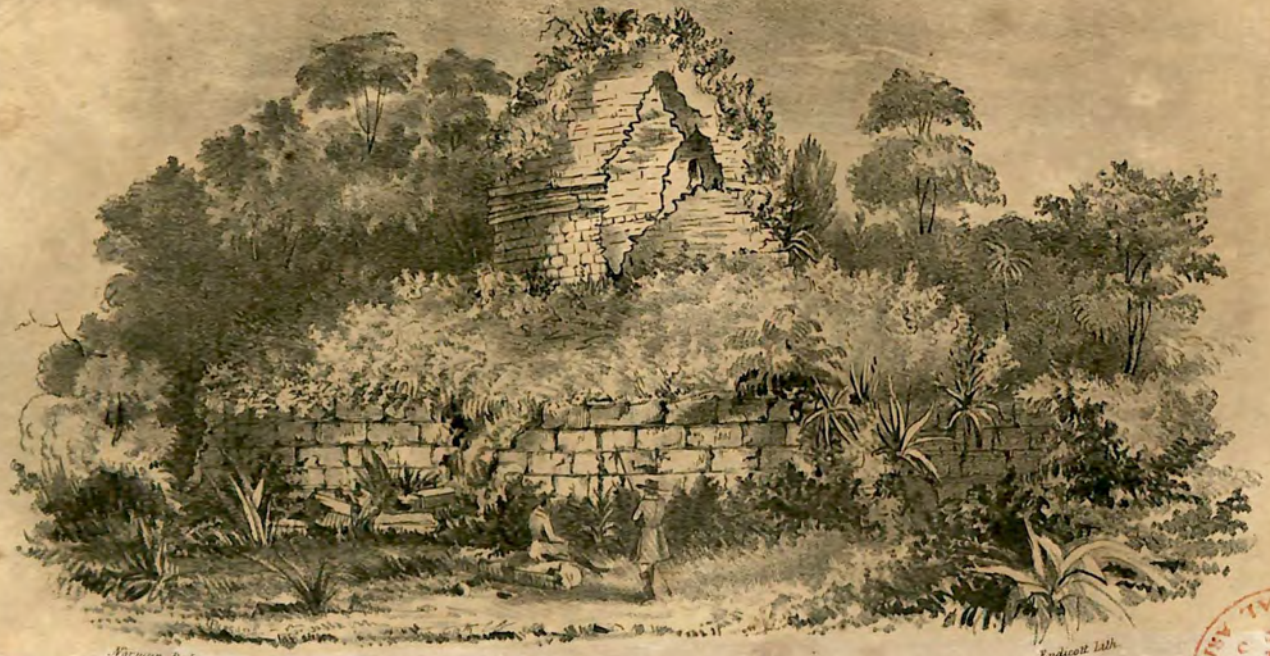
From the temple I proceeded to THE PYRAMID, a few rods to the south. It was a majestic pile; measuring at its base about five hundred and fifty feet, with its sides facing the cardinal points. The angles and sides were beautifully laid with stones of an immense size, gradually lessening, as the work approached the summit or platform.

On the east and north sides are flights of small stone steps, thirty feet wide at the base, and narrowing as they ascend. Those of the south and west are carried up by gradations resembling steps, each about four feet in height, but are more dilapidated than those upon which the steps are constructed.

The bases were piled up with ruins, and overgrown with a rank grass and vines; and it was only after great labor that I was enabled to reach the side facing the east. Here I found two square stones of an enormous size, partly buried in the ruins, which I cleared away. They were plainly carved, representing some monster with wide extended jaws, with rows of teeth and a protruding tongue. These stones,

from their position, were evidently the finish to the base of the steps.

On this side I ascended the fallen and broken steps, through bushes and trees, with which they were partly covered to the summit, one hundred feet. Here I found a terrace or platform, in the centre of which is a square building, one hundred and seventy feet at its base, and twenty feet high. The eastern side of this supplementary structure contains a room twelve by eighteen feet, having two square pillars eight feet high, supporting an angular roof upon strong beams of zuporte wood, the stone and wood being both carved. The sides of the door-ways, and their lintels, are of the same material, and ornamented in the same style. Fronting this room is a corridor supported by two round pillars, three feet in diameter and four in height, standing upon a stone base of two feet; both of which are surmounted with large capitals, hewn or broken in such a manner that no architectural design can now be traced. The sides of these pillars were wrought with figures and lines, which are now quite obliterated. The door-sides of these rooms are built of large square stones, similar to those of the Temple, with the difference of having holes drilled through the inner angles, which were worn smooth, and apparently enlarged by use. The other sides contain rooms and halls in tolerable preservation, having the same form of roofs supported by zuporte wood. These rooms and halls are plastered with a superior finish, and shadowy painted figures are still perceptible. The exterior of the build-



Norman, Del.

Endicott Lith.

THE DOME,

CHI-CHEN RUINS.

ing had been built of fine hewn and uniform blocks of stone, with entablatures of a superior order, and projecting cornices. I could find no access to the top but by the pillars, and by cutting steps in the stone and mortar of the broken edge of the façade, by which, and the aid of bushes, I reached the summit. I found it perfectly level, and one of its corners broken and tumbling down. The whole was covered with a deep soil, in which trees and grass were growing in profusion. From this height I enjoyed a magnificent *coup-d'œil* of all the ruins, and the vast plain around them. I planted a staff upon the summit, with a flag attached, to float upon the breeze, and after much reflection and speculation, with which I do not intend to trouble my readers, I made my way down again, as surveyors say, "to the place of beginning," at a much more rapid rate than I ascended.

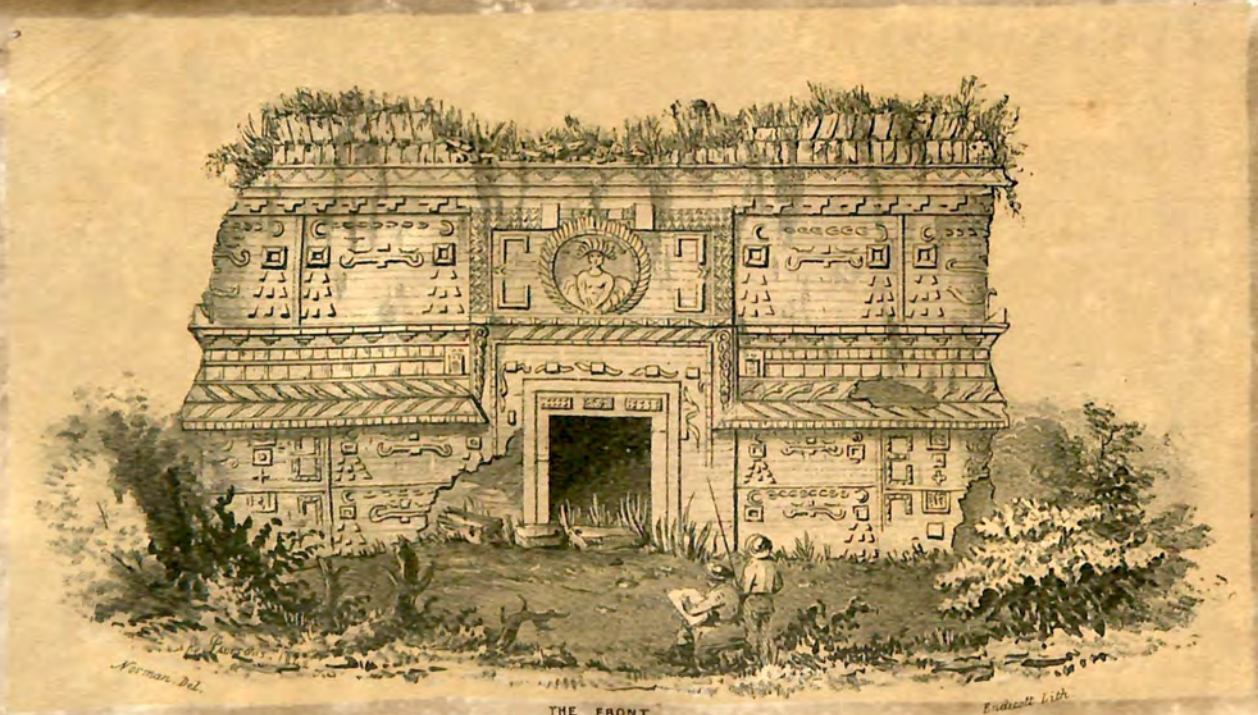
Unlike most similar structures in Egypt, whose "primeval race had run ere antiquity had begun," this pyramid does not culminate at the top, as I have already observed. Pococke has described one, however, at Sak-hara, similar to this, which is the only one of which I have ever heard. The solidity of the structure of the pyramid at Chi-Chen, the harmony and grandeur of its architecture, must impress every one with an exalted idea of the mechanical skill, and the numbers of those by whom it was originally constructed, and like its *elder* (?) brethren in Egypt, so long as it stands, it must remain a monumental protest of an oppressed people against the ill-

directed ambition and tyranny of those rulers at whose command it was built.

About the centre of the ruins of the city is THE DOME, to which I made my way as usual, through thick masses of tangled vegetation, by which it was surrounded. This building stood upon a double foundation, as far as I could judge, though I was unable to satisfy myself completely, owing to the fallen ruins which once formed a part of its structure, but which now almost concealed its base from the view.

I found on the east side broken steps, by which I ascended to a platform built about thirty feet from the base, the sides of which measured each about one hundred and twenty-five feet. The walls were constructed of fine hewn stone, beautifully finished at the top, and the angles, parts of which had fallen, were tastefully curved.

In the centre of this platform, or terrace, was a foundation work, twelve feet high, and in ruins; the four broken sides measuring about fifty feet each, upon which is built a square, of a pyramidical form, fifty feet high, divided off into rooms, but inaccessible, or nearly so, owing to the tottering condition of the walls. I could discover, however, that the inside walls were colored, and the wood that supported and connected the ceilings was in good preservation. In the centre of this square is the DOME, a structure of beautiful proportions, though partially in ruins. It rests upon a finished foundation, the interior of which contains three conic structures, one within the other, a space of six feet intervening; each cone com-



THE FRONT

HOUSE OF THE CACIQUES.

CHI-CHEN RUINS.

municating with the others by door-ways, the inner one forming the shaft. At the height of about ten feet, the cones are united by means of transoms of zuporte. Around these cones are evidences of spiral stairs, leading to the summit.

There is a plan and description published of a "Greenan Temple," which bears an analogy to this structure. It was erected upon a spot which, in former days, was consecrated to the worship of the sun. The name Greenan signifies the place of the sun. This singular edifice is found in the county of Donegal, which rises from the southern shore of Lough Swilly, Ireland, and is represented to be a most lovely place.*

Situated about three rods south-west of the ruins of the Dome, are those of the HOUSE OF THE CACIQUES. I cut my way through the thick growth of small wood to this sublime pile, and by the aid of my compass was enabled to reach the east front of the building. Here I felled the trees that hid it, and the whole front was opened to my view, presenting the most strange and incomprehensible pile of architecture that my eyes ever beheld — elaborate, elegant, stupendous, yet belonging to no order now known to us. The front of this wonderful edifice measures thirty-two feet, and its height twenty, extending to the main building fifty feet. Over the door-way, which favors the Egyptian style of architecture, is a heavy lintel of stone, containing two double rows of hieroglyphics,

* Dublin Penny Journal for 1834 and 1835, pages 349, 350.

with a sculptured ornament intervening. Above these are the remains of hooks carved in stone, with raised lines of drapery running through them; which, apparently, have been broken off by the falling of the heavy finishing from the top of the building; over which, surrounded by a variety of chaste and beautifully executed borders, encircled within a wreath, is a female figure in a sitting posture, in basso-relievo, having a head-dress of feathers, cords, and tassels, and the neck ornamented. The angles of this building are tastefully curved. The ornaments continue around the sides, which are divided into two compartments, different in their arrangement, though not in style. Attached to the angles are large projecting hooks, skilfully worked, and perfect rosettes and stars, with spears reversed, are put together with the utmost precision.

The ornaments are composed of small square blocks of stone, cut to the depth of about one to one and a half inches, apparently with the most delicate instruments, and inserted by a shaft in the wall. The wall is made of large and uniformly square blocks of limestone, set in a mortar which appears to be as durable as the stone itself. In the ornamental borders of this building I could discover but little analogy with those known to me. The most striking were those of the cornice and entablature, *chevron* and the *cable* moulding, which are characteristic of the Norman architecture.

The sides have three door-ways, each opening into small apartments, which are finished with smooth

THE HOUSE OF THE CACIQUES.

CHI-CHEN RUINS.

square blocks of stone; the floors of the same material, but have been covered with cement, which is now broken. The apartments are small, owing to the massive walls enclosing them, and the acute-angled arch, forming the ceiling. The working and laying of the stone are as perfect as they could have been under the directions of a modern architect.

Contiguous to this front are two irregular buildings, as represented in the plan. The one on the right, situated some twenty-five feet from it, (about two feet off the right line,) has a front of about thirty-five feet, its sides ten wide, and its height twenty feet, containing one room similar in its finish to those before described. The front of this building is elaborately sculptured with rosettes and borders, and ornamental lines; the rear is formed of finely cut stone, now much broken. Near by are numerous heaps of hewn and broken stones, sculptured work and pillars.

The other building on the left, is about eight feet from the principal front, measuring twenty-two feet in length, thirteen in width, and thirty-six in height. The top is quite broken, and has the appearance of having been much higher. The *agave Americana* was growing thriftily upon its level roof. On all sides of this building are carved figures, broken images, in sitting postures; rosettes and ornamental borders, laid off in compartments; each compartment having three carved hooks on each side and angle. This building con-

tains but one room, similar to that on the right. A soil has collected on the tops or roofs of these structures to the depth of three or four feet, in which trees and other vegetation are flourishing.

From these portions of the ruins I worked my way through the wild thicket, by which they are surrounded, to the north side of the main building, in the centre of which I found a flight of small stone steps, overgrown with bushes and vines, which I cut away, and made an ascent by pulling myself up to the summit, a distance of forty feet. This platform is an oblong square, one hundred by seventy-five feet. Here a range of rooms were found, occupying about two-thirds of the area; the residue of the space probably formed a promenade, which is now filled up with crumbling ruins, covered with trees and grass. These rooms varied in size; the smallest of which measured six by ten, and the largest six by twenty-two feet.

The most of these rooms were plastered, or covered with a fine white cement, some of which was still quite perfect. By washing them, I discovered fresco paintings; but they were much obliterated. The subjects could not be distinguished. On the eastern end of these rooms is a hall running transversely, four feet wide, (having the high angular ceiling,) one side of which is filled with a variety of sculptured work, principally rosettes and borders, with rows of small pilasters; having three square recesses, and a small room on either side. Over the doorways of each are stone lintels three feet square,

carved with hieroglyphics both on the front and under side. The western end of these rooms is in almost total ruins. The northern side has a flight of stone steps, but much dilapidated, leading to the top; which, probably, was a look-out place, but is now almost in total ruins. The southern range of rooms is much broken; the outside of which yet shows the elaborate work with which the whole building was finished.

I vainly endeavored to find access to the interior of the main building. I discovered two breaches, caused, probably, by the enormous weight of the pile, and in these apertures I made excavations; but could not discover any thing like apartments of any description. It seemed to be one vast body of stone and mortar, kept together by the great solidity of the outer wall, which was built in a masterly manner, of well-formed materials. The angles were finished off with circular blocks of stones, of a large and uniform size.

In a northwest direction from the hacienda, of which mention has already been made, are the ruins of a house which, owing, probably, to its having been constructed without any artificial foundation, is still in good preservation. It bears but little resemblance to any of its fellows. It contains eighteen rooms, the largest of which measures eight by twenty-four feet, arranged in double rows, or ante-rooms, and lighted only by a single doorway. They all have the high angular ceilings, like the other buildings, which enclose as much space as the rooms

themselves. Those fronting the south are the most remarkable, the inner doorways having each a stone lintel of an unusually large size, measuring thirty-two inches wide, forty-eight long, and twelve deep; having on its inner side a sculptured figure of an Indian in full dress, with cap and feathers, sitting upon a cushioned seat, finely worked; having before him a vase containing flowers, with his right hand extended over it, his left resting upon the side of the cushion—the whole bordered with hieroglyphics. The front part of this lintel contains two rows of hieroglyphics.

The building is irregular, having a projection in the centre, on one side, of eight feet; on the other, of four feet. It measures one hundred and fifty feet long, forty-three wide, and twenty high; flat roof, unbroken, and filled with trees and grass to the whole extent. The outside and partition walls have a uniform thickness of three feet.

Among other ruins contiguous to those already described, I discovered two detached piles about two rods apart. They were erected upon foundations of about twenty feet in height, which were surrounded and sustained by well-cemented walls of hewn stone, with curved angles, measuring two hundred and forty feet around them, parts of which were in good preservation. We ascended to the platform of the one in the best condition, in the centre of which stands the ruins of a building measuring twenty-one by forty feet; the west front being quite perfect, and shows sculptured work along the whole

extent of its façade. The only accessible part was a hall, having a range of hieroglyphics the whole length over the doorways, the rooms of which were in total ruins. Across these halls were beams of wood, creased as if they had been worn by hammock-ropes.

In a line with these ruins and the temple are numerous mounds, covered with loose stones and vegetation. Between these and the temple are the ruins of a mass of foundation-work, about forty feet high; the top of which is covered with piles of crumbling stones, and ruins of a structure that once adorned it. These stones were of an immense size, some square, some round; and the others either plain, hewn, or sculptured. Among these there are two even larger than the rest, and similar to those found at the base of the Pyramid. Likewise, among these ruins I found pillars, beautifully worked with figures and ornamental lines; some of which are standing, apparently, in their original position. Also, upright blocks, six feet high and two thick, of each of which one surface was covered with hieroglyphics. Near by were six square fragments of pillars, at uniform distances apart from each other. These, too, were sculptured with ornaments and hieroglyphics. Nothing could be seen of these ruins from the base of the structure, as they were buried among trees, and overgrown with long grass and shrubs.

Besides those we have attempted to describe, there are other ruins of which some remains of walls are standing; and contiguous thereto lie immense piles

of worked stone, which, though presenting no new feature in the architecture of these buildings, yet serve to give a more adequate idea of the size and grandeur of this great city. In my walks in the vicinity, extending miles in every direction, I have seen broken walls and mounds, fragments of columns, and carved and sculptured stone, some of which were of as extraordinary dimensions as any that I have noticed, deeply imbedded in the soil, and wholly disconnected with any other structure; though they were, without doubt, the remains of splendid and extensive edifices.

The following general characteristics of all these ruins may not be thought impertinent to my subject, by those who have had the curiosity to follow me thus far in the details:—

They are situated upon a plain of many miles in circumference, nearly in the centre of the province; upwards of one hundred miles from the sea, and away from all water communication. They have no apparent order, or laying-out of streets, as the plan shows; but that they bear evidence of a people highly skilled in the mechanical arts, as also in a portion of the sciences, must be conclusive to my readers.

The buildings which are now in the most perfect state of preservation, are the temple, castle, pyramid, and other erections, upon a succession of terraces composed of *rubble*, imbedded in mortar, held together by finished walls of fine concrete limestone: the sides of which are invariably located with refer-

ence to the four cardinal points, and the principal fronts facing the east.

The walls of the buildings rise perpendicularly, generally, to one-half the height, where there are entablatures; above which, to the cornice, the façades are laid off in compartments, which are elaborately ornamented with stone sculpture-work over a diamond lattice ground, illustrated with hieroglyphic figures of various kinds; the whole interspersed with chaste and unique borders, executed with the greatest possible skill and precision. The stones are cut in *parallelopipeds* of about twelve inches in length and six in breadth; the interstices filled up of the same material of which the terraces are composed.

The height of these buildings generally is twenty, and rarely above twenty-five feet. They are limited to one story, long and narrow, without windows. The rooms are confined to a double range, receiving no other light than what passes through the doorway. The ceilings are built in the form of an acute-angled arch by layers of flat stones, the edges being bevelled and carried up to the apex, upon which rests a stone that serves as a key.

The interior of some of the most important of these rooms is finished with a beautiful white composition, laid on with the greatest skill. Fresco painting in these rooms is also observable, and the colors still in good preservation; sky blue and light green being the most prominent. Figures of Indian characters can be discerned, but not with sufficient distinctness for the subject to be traced. The floors are

covered with a hard composition, which shows marks of wear. The doorways are nearly a square of about seven feet, somewhat resembling the Egyptian; the sides of which are formed of large blocks of hewn stone. In some instances the lintels are of the same material, with hieroglyphics and lines carved upon the outer surfaces. Stone rings, and holes at the sides of the doorways, indicate that doors once swung upon them.

AGAVE AMERICANA.

CHAPTER VII.

An Arrival — Unexpected Honors — Usurpation of Office — Prices of Labor — Indian way of Living — A Sonato — An Incident — Departure — Yacaba — Sonato at Tabi — Arrival at Sotuta — "Las Ruinas" — A Benediction — Cantamayec — Turn Physician — Successful Practice — The Reward of Merit — Route to Teabo — Its Curate — Mani — Arrival at Ticul — Description of Ticul — The Church — Curate — Market-place — Pretty Women — Convent — Occupations — Health — Roads — Sugar Estates — Ruins of Ichmul — Departure — Cross the Cordilleras.

During my stay in the vicinity of Chi-Chen, the family of the major-domo were expected to arrive from Valladolid. Accordingly, great preparations were made to receive them. Arches were thrown over the doors, around the corridors of the house, and erected across the road near by. The Indians made ready, with their drums and fifes, and with other forms of congratulation, to hail the approaching visiters. At sun-down on Saturday evening the "coaches," so well described by Mr. Stephens in his travels in Yucatan, were seen coming along the road. The music commenced; the bell of our little habitation lifted up its noisy tones of gladness, and all was in commotion. They were soon at the door, and carefully set down by the Indian bearers; and the contents of the carriage, composed of women

and children, crawled out upon their hands and knees and hurried into the house. The "coaches" were now put aside, and preparations made to have a joyful evening. In the morning (Sunday) we learned that the Indians not only had an evening, as we supposed they would have, but a whole night of dancing and singing. At daylight they awakened me by coming into my quarters, for the purpose of going to matins. The bell was ringing, the candles were lighted, the little boxes opened, and the altar kissed. It was the work of a few minutes, when the bell ceased, the candles were extinguished, the little doors closed; and, by the time the last pattering of the sandal-footed Indian sounded upon the stone floor as he left the house, I was once more asleep.

This morning, at the usual breakfast hour, I left the "vestry" for the house. On the way thither I was met by the major-domo, who, I observed, was very polite indeed — unusually so. He took my hand and led me into the dwelling, where the best hammock was opened for my reception. I sat down and took a swing. Presently the lady of the mansion, who had arrived "by coach" the previous evening, made her appearance, dropping me one of her sweetest courtesies, and passed out at another door. The children all followed in slow procession, giving me a similar salutation; until, eventually, I was left alone in silent astonishment. During this ceremony the Indians were peeping in at the doors, apparently awaiting their turn; and, sure enough, it came. They approached in single file, to the number of

some thirty, and, as they marched past, partially knelt, and made all sorts of obeisances; which were acknowledged with as much form as my inexperienced greatness could command. I was lost in amazement. I began to survey the room in search of a mirror, to see what change had taken place in my person; and the fact stared me in the face. It was my black suit, that I had put on in the morning, (not being on fatigue duty to-day,) that had given this first impression of my importance — having, heretofore, only appeared in my working guise before them. In my future rambles, I shall benefit by my experience in this little affair; and would recommend it to the careful consideration of all who may hereafter travel in these parts. After breakfast I stepped aside, and examined the coat more particularly, to ascertain how long its newly discovered virtues might be expected to abide with it. I was delighted to find that it would probably supply me with all the dignity I should require during my residence in the country.

This (Sunday) has been a lovely day, so far as nature was concerned. Nothing but the continuation of the dancing and the wild music, interrupted at times by the revelry of drunken Indians, could be heard, except the services at the church by the same actors! At vespers, the principal officiate was so drunk that he dropped the incense-cup, and broke it all to pieces. Unfortunately for his dignity, it fell upon my foot; whereat I was so vexed, that I trundled the old reprobate most unceremoniously out of

the sanctuary, and performed the ceremonies myself, as well as I knew how, and dismissed the congregation. If the pope has any gratitude he will send me a cardinal's hat, at least, for this interference.

There are about eighty Indians attached to this estate. Their wages is one dollar per month and a sack of corn, which contains about two bushels, worth here from thirty-seven and a half to fifty cents per sack; but the amount of wages varies in different parts of the country. In some sections laborers are employed by the job—so much for cutting down wood, the work being measured out; so much for planting an acre; and in the same way for taking in the crops, &c., the prices of which are regulated by custom; but they are all under as abject bondage at present as if they had been born slaves. Their wages, low as they are—owing to the few wants of these people—more than cover their necessary expenses; but the taxes, and the feasts of the church, absorb all the surplus. I have known an Indian to expend his month's pay, and all he was possessed of besides, in the purchase of candles and trinkets for a single festival day; the former to burn before, and the latter to decorate, his tutelar saint.

They are permitted to build their huts on the lands of the estate without cost. Among those I visited, the best were miserable enough; consisting merely of poles driven perpendicularly into the ground, to support a thatched roof. Although plenty of soil is allowed them, they cultivate nothing for themselves

Everything around them indicates indolence and squalid poverty.

In my rambles in the neighborhood of the hacienda, I discovered, at about the distance of a mile, a sonata, situated in a dell of the most romantic appearance; the sides, rising to the height of a hundred feet, are circular, and are formed of broken and cragged rocks, overgrown with trees, bushes, and vines. The water is about ten fathoms deep, clear and good; and always remains without fluctuation except once or twice a year, in seasons of heavy rains or extreme drought. There appears to be but one place at the margin where the water is accessible. A part of a stone wall is here perceptible, and also steps beneath the surface. Less romantic places than this have made more than one chapter in the mythology of the ancient Greeks.

While I was thinking that this might be the scene where many a tender tale of love may have been whispered, a thousand years ago, by the simple swain and artless damsel who dwelt near its margin — that here the proud cacique may once have loitered with the lovely mistress of his affections — while I was meditating over the probability, the almost certainty of these things, something of a parallel nature was, in reality, transpiring in my immediate vicinity. My right-hand man, José, whose peculiar propensity has before been hinted at, was pouring out his heart to a beautiful Indian girl a few rods distant, and she was listening to his story of love with all the attention that the most faithful passion could deserve.

They were not, however, permitted to dream themselves into an undisturbed state of happiness. It is said that love is jealous as well as watchful. They had been observed by a rival, who suddenly breaking in upon their stolen moments, threatened total annihilation to all their blissful anticipations. José manfully contended for his rights; but, had I not come up at the critical instant, there is no telling to what extent the rupture might have been carried. My presence, however, soon allayed the excitement. It was not difficult to discern that José was the preferred one. I learned from him that the fair cause of his trouble was from the neighborhood of Merida, an old acquaintance; and that pledges of love had long since been exchanged between them; but circumstances had removed her from his vicinity, he knew not whither, until the present accidental meeting had again thrown them into each other's arms. Such being the case, I promised to intercede with the major-domo in their behalf, which I subsequently did, but without the entire success that I had anticipated.

Having concluded my visit at Chi-Chen, and my curiosity being fully satisfied, I was ready at an early hour to continue my journey westward. The Indians, to the number of fifty or sixty, had collected to witness our departure. They had been very civil to us during our stay; and, to express our acknowledgments, I knew no better way than to make them a few presents, with which they appeared to be highly pleased. We took leave of our kind host and hostess with regret. They had taken great pains to make

my stay comfortable among them, and I shall always remember them with gratitude. By eight o'clock we were out of sight of castles and palaces, and buried in the thick woods of the country. Our route lay over a narrow stony path, through the small Indian town of Piste to Yacaba — a distance of about nine leagues; where we arrived at two o'clock, rode up to the Casa-real, and dismounted in the square. The church occupied one side of it, and public offices and dwellings the others. The square is spacious, and comprises nearly the whole town. Many of the houses are uninhabited and going to ruin. It had rained heavily during the morning, and the rooms of the Casa-real, as usual, did not present a very favorable aspect to the wet and fatigued traveller. However, we got our horses taken care of, and succeeded in obtaining a tolerable breakfast. By five o'clock the inhabitants began to leave their hammocks, and made their way to the Casa-real, knowing, apparently, by instinct, or some faculty peculiar to the inhabitants of small towns, that strangers had arrived. In this instance, we were glad to see them; for we were sadly in want of a dry place to rest in. They offered to do every thing for us. We told them our wants, by showing them the rooms of the Casa-real. They promised to get others, appeared glad to serve us, and treated us with great politeness. Off they started, as we supposed, to fit us out for the night; and that is the last we ever saw of them. This is mentioned merely to show a marked characteristic of the people. A stran-

ger, with a sanguine temperament, in this province. must suffer!

We were obliged, as usual, to depend upon ourselves for quarters; and, after much research, and disturbing the quiet of many poor old women in their hammocks, we found a store-house, in which we became somewhat comfortably accommodated for the night. Shortly after sunrise, on the following morning, we continued our journey to Tabi, a distance of two leagues. At this place we spent an hour in visiting a sonato, one of the most celebrated in the country. It had been the scene of some *miracle*, the particulars of which we were unable to learn, and is therefore held in much reverence by the Indians. The circumference is about fifty feet, and it is about seventy to the surface of the water from the top of the ground. The water is said to be about a hundred feet deep, and has a subterraneous channel, the extent of which is unknown. A small chapel is erected upon its border. In the absence of all rivers in this country, these watering-places, or natural wells, seem to be one of the most striking gifts of God's beneficence. Near this chapel is a tree of the mammee species, peculiar to the province, of extraordinary dimensions, growing, apparently, out of a solid rock.

This town is principally inhabited by Indians. The few whites here, as is usual in many other places, principally maintain themselves by selling small articles, cotton cloth, and liquors to the Indians. Save a church, there were no public buildings in the place.

No animation or purpose was to be seen among these listless Indians, who in that, as in other particulars, resembled all of their race whom I had yet seen.

We continued our journey on to Sotuta, a distance of three leagues, where we arrived at eleven o'clock, over a good road, upon which the Indians were at that time engaged in working out their road-tax.

This is a pleasant town, having a fine square, neatly laid out, with much regularity, and well built. While we were at breakfast, seated on a long wooden bench (the usual table of the Casa-real) saddle-wise, with our customary company, ten to twenty Indians squatted (after their manner) about us, we were waited upon by the curious of the place. They wished to know who we were, and where we were going? To which we gave satisfactory answers. They offered us their best services, as usual, and left us. Soon after they left, the curate called, and was so kind as to offer us his house, and all the appurtenances thereto appertaining, of which, however, owing to our limited stay, I did not think it worth my while to accept. Knowing that I wished to see all that was interesting in his curacy, he, the dear soul, carried me a league, through a burning sun, to see what he called "las ruinas." I walked to them cheerfully enough, for I anticipated something of an exciting nature. On reaching them, they proved to be merely the walls of a badly built house, which had pertained to a hacienda, and which was not over fifty years of age. When he first called my attention to them, I thought he was playing off a practical joke;

but it was not so; it was a sincere desire to please. Short-sighted mortal! his day-dreams had never been disturbed by a knowledge of the pyramids, palaces, and castles of Chi-Chen! By a visit to the convent, however, on my return, I was fully indemnified for all my disappointment, by the good things which appear always to concentrate in these places; and I soon forgot our fatiguing walk to "las ruinas," by a swing in the hammock.

While I was here enjoying myself, during the heat of the day, an Indian brought in a bundle, containing a shroud, intended for some deceased person. The curate apologized; ordered his robes, in which he was soon enveloped; had a candle lighted, to which was affixed a silver cross; gave it to me to hold; took his book, and read over a benediction, occasionally sprinkling water upon the cloth intended for the dead. This was done in an off-hand style, and the Indian was quickly dismissed.

It was with some difficulty that I was enabled to tear myself away from my kind host; and it was late before we started for Cantamayec, four leagues distant, where we intended to sleep. Before sundown, however, we bade him adieu, and passing over a rocky path through the woods, we arrived at our stopping-place at nine o'clock.

Little had we anticipated the cool reception we were doomed to meet, or we should have remained with our reverend friend of Sotuta. On reaching the Casa-real of this most miserable town, we found it occupied by half-breeds and Indians, making them-

selves merry and drunk, upon the occasion offered them by some one of the innumerable feast-days with which their calendar is crowded. The prospect for us, we observed on dismounting, was not very flattering. We stated to them that we were travellers; and wished a privilege with them at the Casa-real for the night, and at the same time offered them money, to remunerate them for their aid in procuring food for ourselves and horses; but we could obtain nothing. Their reply was, that the Casa-real and its yards were full, and that there was no food or water to be had. This was bringing affairs to a crisis. The prospect was that we were to "hang out" during the night. Remonstrance was thought of; but experience had long since taught me that remonstrance with these people was vain. A man in the crowd was observed with *trousers on;* and with him I thought something might be done, but I was made to perceive that trousers are only the uniform, but not an evidence of civilization. A squally night was before me, and no prospect of a shelter. I thought of trying "the plenipo"—à la Stephens—but my starred and striped blanket was in tatters, and I had no "half dollars." Sunken as I was in the abyss of trouble, my magical coat never occurred to me. At a complete loss what to do, we walked about the town, in anticipation of some favorable accident, followed by a concourse of idle Indians. We were about returning to our horses in despair, when, passing a hut, with its only door half opened, we saw an old woman lying in her hammock, sick. I thought of

the "medico." With this ray of hope to encourage me, I entered, blessing the house and its inmates, with the best Latin I could muster. A dim light was burning in a calabash, which stood in the corner. In the centre of the room were some half-extinguished embers, with the few cooking utensils which the *cuisine* of this country require, being near them. A girl was engaged in making some cooling drink for the invalid; and, upon the whole, I felt that my prospects were looking up. So I drew up a stool to the side of the hammock, and looked the "medico" at the invalid, to the best of my abilities. The Indians from without were collecting around; I talked in a very deliberate tone, as if just bursting with a plethora of science, felt the pulse, and examined the tongue! At this stage of proceedings, an Indian bent down to my ear, and asked, in a low voice, if he should go for food for our horses? I graciously consented. I showed my pocket compass, the nearest approach to a surgical instrument of any thing I had about me, made a few more learned remarks upon the pathogenetic and therapeutic properties of matter, and advised the patient to bathe her feet and hold her tongue.

The fire upon the floor was rekindled; eggs and tortillas were soon placed before us, and I venture to say, that no catechumen in medicine ever received his first professional fee with more delight, than I did mine on this occasion. The patient declared herself to be much better. So was I. I soon began to feel myself "at home." José made ready our ham-

mocks, drove the intruding Indians out of the house, and, in a few moments, we buried all our cares and troubles in deep and undisturbed slumbers.

Awaking early in the morning, I found the patient much improved, if I might be permitted to judge from her nasal achievements; and, thinking it would be a pity to disturb her, I determined not to wait for any farther fee, but directed José silently to fold our hammocks, and putting them under our arms, we left the premises, and made our way to where our horses were quartered. Every thing being ready, we were soon in the saddle, and, without much regret, left the town; but not without a sincere wish that the patient, whose comfort had been so unexpectedly identified with mine, might rapidly recover.

We were now on the road to Teabo, a distance of about seven leagues, where we arrived at two o'clock in the afternoon. We experienced no little difficulty in finding the town, owing to the numerous paths that presented themselves leading to the haciendas and ranchos in the vicinity, and owing to the town being almost buried among the small trees and bushes by which it was surrounded. Our confusion was ten times more confounded by the directions of the Indians; and, finally, we were obliged to have recourse to the pocket-compass. This is an article with which every tourist in untravelled countries should provide himself. He will find it an invaluable guide when he is alone; and it will prove as efficacious as one ghost, at least, in controlling the services of these superstitious people.

The Casa-real being occupied by muleteers, I got permission of the polite owner of a store near by to deposite our trappings, and to make my toilet in one corner of his establishment. For this purpose a heap of corn was removed, which so facilitated my preparations, that I was soon in a condition to pay my respects to the town. After I had made some examination of it, however, I concluded that my time had been wasted. It was, like all the others, as dull and inanimate as the rocks upon which it stood. As I had always discovered, if there were any thing of interest in these places, it radiated from the curate, I bent my steps, in the evening, towards his house. He was a fatherly-looking old gentleman, received me very kindly, ordered the best room in the convent to be made ready for my reception, and a good supper to be prepared. He talked much of his curacy, and seemed to be devoted to the people, as they evidently were to him. Good order was observable about his house, which is rarely to be met with in the like places. He showed me his library, which was composed of about twenty volumes of Latin and Spanish books. After passing a very pleasant evening with this good old man, I bade him adieu and retired to my room, which was decorated, or furnished rather, on all sides, with the symbols of the church, such as crosses, sculls, images, &c.; but which did not, so far as I could discover, materially affect my repose during the night.

Early in the morning, after taking chocolate, which my kind host had provided, we were mounted and

on our way to Ticul. We passed through a number of small towns, one of which was Mani, about three leagues from Teabo, and formerly the capital of the province. The only fact connected with the history of this place, of interest to the traveller, is one of a character kindred to that which has given an infamous immortality to the Calif Omar, and, in later days, to Cardinal Ximenes; a man who lived in an age, and professed a religion, which should have taught him better. This was the place, as I learned while at Merida, where the ancient history of the Maya people was destroyed, by order of a Franciscan monk named Landa. These books were thought by the inquisitor to contain some heretical matters; and, with a bigotry and stupidity which we can now hardly allude to in terms sufficiently moderate to be printed, he directed those books to be taken out and burnt in the public square. This history was written in hieroglyphical characters, and its destruction has doubtless deprived posterity of the key to the whole history of the Maya nation.

We arrived at Ticul after a fatiguing ride, under a hot sun, at half past two o'clock in the afternoon, on Saturday, the 19th of February. Our coming was anticipated, and good apartments were prepared for us in the convent, where we were comfortably accommodated, and fully resolved to remain until we had become thoroughly recruited. José was about worn out, and the horses' feet were in a sad condition. My trousers were torn, my boots were cut up, and my altogether ruinous condition was more in

sympathy with the country which I was visiting, than accorded with my taste or my comfort. In this condition, I thought it would be no more than an act of prudence to lie by for a few days to repair damages. I amused myself meantime in strolling about the town, which I found decidedly pleasant. It had a life and activity about it that I had not before seen for a long time. I saw the sun set this evening behind the Cordilleras; it was a beautiful and imposing sight.

This town is large and well built, though not very compact; enough so, however, to make it a very desirable place of residence. It is town and country, beautifully intermingled. It has a fine open square, church, and market-place, and several stores.

The church, occupying one corner of the square, is built in the form of a cross, and has a well-proportioned dome to set it off. The mass of devotees that assemble here daily are decently dressed and good-looking. The curate is a middle-aged man, who has read much, and figured considerably in the late political revolutions of the province; and is, probably, more conversant with the history of his country than any man in it. Some of the most interesting ruins of the country are within his curacy, and he was the only person I encountered in the country who had devoted much time to an examination of them. He received me very cordially, and was exceedingly kind and attentive during my stay.

The market-place is small; but it is well supplied, and kept clean. It was rather a strange sight to me

to see cattle butchered in the open streets and public thoroughfares of the town, as is the custom here.

This town enjoys a notoriety for its pretty Mestizas, or half-breed Indian women; which, as far as I am able to judge, it justly deserves. They are well formed, and have regular features and brunette complexions, which are in fine contrast with their long black hair and simple loose dress. Their dresses are always neat, and hang from the shoulders without being girded at the waist. They are trimmed off by the fair hands of the wearers with ornamental borders, &c., &c.

The convent in the rear of, and immediately adjoining the church, is an immense pile of stone, built in 1624, and was formerly inhabited by monks of the order of St. Francis. The only habitable part of this vast structure, at present, is occupied by the curate, the padre, and myself. A suite of three rooms were given to me; but, in my humble way, I made two suffice. Its blackened walls, its spacious halls and corridors, dilapidated casements, its numerous squares and gardens, all going to ruin, presented the same melancholy picture that is to be seen in all the principal towns in the province.

A large portion of the inhabitants are Mestizos, who are orderly and well to do in the world. Their houses, in the borders of the town, are comfortable; and the wide-spreading palm, growing near, gives to them quite a picturesque appearance. They manufacture hats for exportation, and earthenware for home use.

The health of the town is good. This may be attributed not only to the climate, but to the uniform temperance of these people, both in eating and drinking.

The roads to and from the principal towns are kept in excellent order. Portions of them, in the immediate vicinity, with the low stone walls at the sides, covered with vegetation, resemble those of England.

In the adjoining districts, there are several large sugar plantations. Near the town of Tekax, considerable attention is paid to the cultivation of sugar, which is raised entirely for domestic consumption.

The ruins of Ichmul are situated about a half league north of the town of Ticul. The padre, with a few friends, accompanied me to visit them. What was my surprise, on arriving at this place, to observe a succession of mounds, or tumuli, extending many miles around, in every direction, as far as the eye could reach—the sepulchres, perhaps, of millions! who, in their turn, possibly, have looked upon similar appearances, that exist no longer, with the same thoughts as we give utterance to in beholding these! The grounds are now covered with grass and trees —a range for cattle! Some of these mounds were forty feet high. Several of them had been opened by the direction and under the superintendence of the curate, and within were found rooms, and skeletons deposited in a sitting posture, with small pots at their feet, which was the position in which the ancient Mexicans were in the habit of burying their dead. The walls and ceilings were quite perfect.

Large pieces of hewn stone and pillars were lying scattered around these places, affording ground for the presumption that they were formerly portions of a once great and populous city.

On our return with the padre, we dismounted at his house; our horses were led through it, and myself into it, where, seated in a hammock, I partook of refreshments, and spent a very pleasant hour with my kind cicerone. I then took my leave, returned to the convent, rode through the long hall, and dismounted at my parlor door.

February 23d, at seven o'clock in the morning, I bade adieu to my good friends of Ticul, and we continued our journey. It was a delightful morning; our route was along the foot and across the Cordilleras; which we ascended by a narrow, rough, and cragged pass. We were obliged to dismount shortly after we commenced the rise, as the steep and slippery rocks make it not only difficult but hazardous, and we were glad to lead our horses over in safety. The prospect from the summit was beautiful and picturesque. Our descent was rather more easy and rapid; and we reached the town of Nohcacab, three leagues distant, at half past eight o'clock. Here we took a hasty breakfast, procured a guide, and were again on the road to Kahbah, distant three leagues, for the purpose of looking at the ruins which we learned were to be seen at this place.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Ruins of Kahbah — Those of Zayi — Scattered Ruins — Church at Nohcacab — The Padre — The Town — Departure for Uxmal — Arrival at the Hacienda — Quarters and Arrangements — The Scenery — General Character of the Ruins of Uxmal — The Governor's House — The Nuns' House — The Pyramid — Other Remains — Pyramids, Walls, and Mounds — Reservoir — Moonlight.

I FIRST entered upon the ruins of Kahbah from the main road leading from Nohcacab to Bolen-Chen-Ticul. On the west side I found fragments of buildings, walls, &c., scattered about, principally upon a low range of hills. No perfect rooms were visible. Parts of walls and ceilings were seen, and the ground about covered up with rubbish, mingled with broken pillars, sculptured work, &c. In the building farthest from the road, (which is in the best preservation of any on the west side,) we observed two square pillars, which had been taken from the door-way, and placed against the ceiling of the room, by some traveller, no doubt, who intended to present them to the world. They are about six feet high and two wide; the front facings of which are deeply cut, representing a cacique, or other dignitary, in full dress, (apparently a rich Indian costume,) with a profusion of feathers in his head-dress. He is represented with

his arms uplifted, holding a whip; a boy before him in a kneeling position, with his hands extended in supplication; underneath are hieroglyphics. The room is small, with the ceiling slightly curved; differing, in this particular, from those of Chi-Chen.

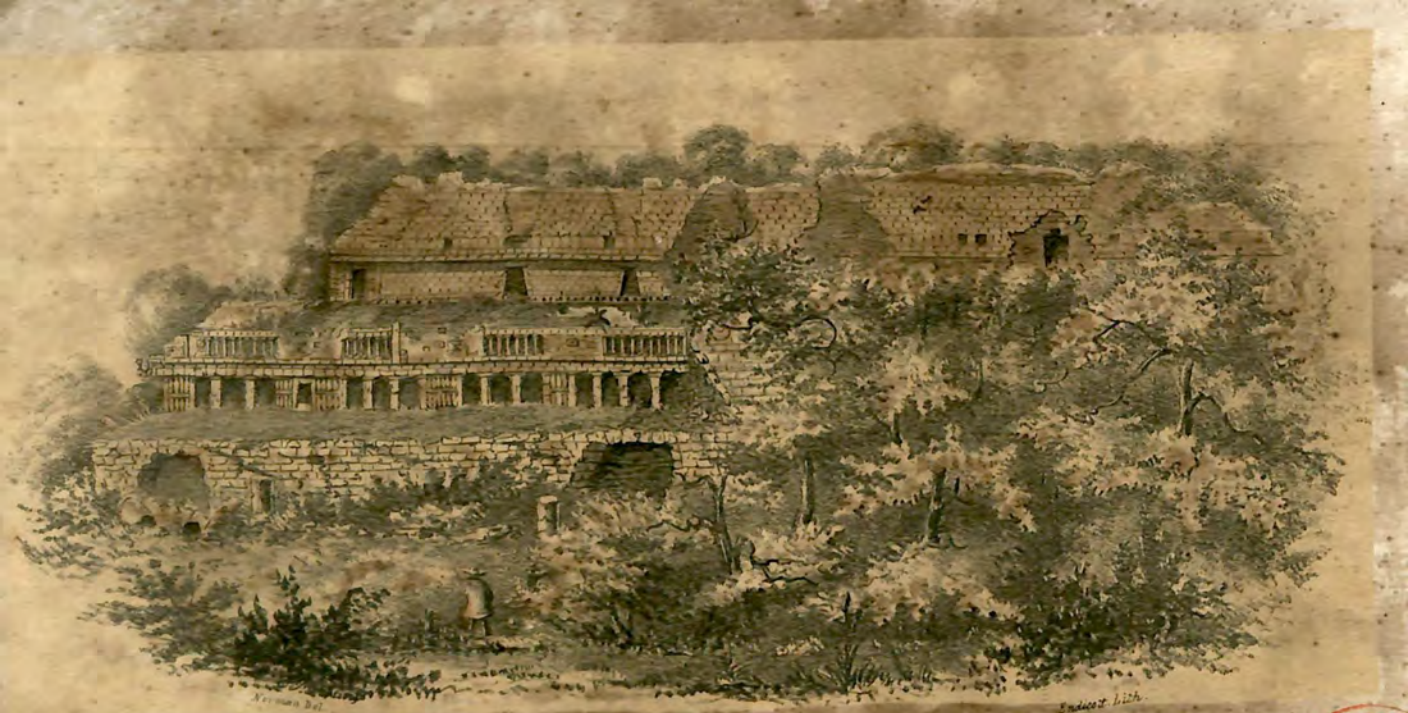
The ruins on the east side of the road comprise mainly three buildings, and an immense pile of stone in a pyramidical form, and in a much better state of preservation than those on the opposite side. These buildings are elevated upon a succession of terraces, which I ascended by a double flight of broken steps, to a square formed in front of each; the sides of which show the existence of walls now nearly levelled, and overgrown with trees and vegetation. Sufficient, however, is remaining of two buildings to indicate a similarity with those of the opposite side. The fronts measure about one hundred feet, the façades of which are ornamented with the most elaborate and skilful work, though now much broken and defaced. The carvings are somewhat similar to those of Chi-Chen; but they are much smaller, and do not display as much order in the arrangement. Broken columns, of unusual sizes, are to be seen a short distance from these buildings, evidently moved from their original positions.

The door-step of the principal inner room is elaborately sculptured, and entirely different from any thing I have observed in other places. In the centre of one of these squares, foundation walls are to be seen, which have been recently excavated. They, probably, were pedestals. These structures stand, uni-

formly, about four rods apart, on a line; and all have mounds and a succession of broken walls contiguous to them.

A few rods north of these buildings is a mass of broken stones, piled together in the shape of a pyramid, at the summit of which, to the height of one hundred and twenty-five feet, are still to be found the remains of the broken walls of an edifice. It is located, with reference to the cardinal points, like the pyramid of Chi-Chen, and was probably used for the same purposes, (whatever those might have been,) though the style of the work is not similar or equal to it. Its sides, at the base, measure five hundred feet, and are mostly bare; the loose stones barely maintain their form. The space occupied by these ruins cannot be less than a mile square.

On the 24th of February, at sunrise, we were again in the saddle, passing over the same road as yesterday, and following a guide, with his pack of maza and water, the Yucatan "staff of life," in pursuit of other ruins, situated about two and a half leagues south-east of those at Kahbah. The road was good, and its direction through several ranchos. Halting at one of these, under a shed of boughs, erected in front of a rudely built Indian church, we took our breakfast. The variety and quality of our repast were not such as to detain us long, and we were soon upon our route, through a hilly country to Zayi. I found my way to the principal ruin with little difficulty, it having been recently visited, as I learned from the natives, by Mr. Stephens, to whose recent labors I



ZAVI RUINS.

was much indebted in approaching the object of my search; the usual impediments of trees and wild thickets, by which it was surrounded, having been removed. THE RUINS OF ZAYI are situated in the midst of a succession of beautiful hills, forming around them, on every side, an enchanting landscape.

The principal one is composed of a single structure, an immense pile, facing the south, and standing upon a slight natural elevation. The first foundation is now so broken that its original form cannot be fully determined; but it probably was that of a parallelogram. Its front wall shows the remains of rooms and ceilings, with occasional pillars, which, no doubt, supported the corridors. The height of this wall is about twenty feet, and, as near as I was able to measure around its base, (owing to the accumulation of ruins,) it was ascertained to be two hundred and sixty-eight feet long, and one hundred and sixteen wide.

In the centre of this foundation stands the main building, the western half only remaining, with a portion of the steps, outside, leading to the top. This part shows a succession of corridors, occupying the whole front, each supported by two pillars, with plain square caps and plinths, and intervening spaces, filled with rows of small ornamented pillars. In the rear of these corridors are rooms of small dimensions and angular ceilings, without any light except that which the front affords. Over these corridors, or pillars, is a fine moulding finish, its angle ornamented with a hook similar to those of Chi-Chen. Above

this moulding is a finish of small plain round pillars, or standards, interspersed with squares of fine ornamental carvings; the centre of the façade showing the remains of more elaborate work, concentrated within a border, the arrangement of which is lost. There is an evident analogy existing between these ornaments and those of Kahbah, but order is less apparent. I could discover no resemblance whatever to those of Chi-Chen.

Over these rooms of the main building is another terrace, or foundation, in the centre of which is a building in similar ruins to those under it; having, also, broken steps leading to the top. It stands upon a foundation, apparently, of six to eight feet in height, occupying about two-thirds of the area; the residue, probably, forming a promenade. There are three doorways yet remaining, the lintels and sides of which are broken, and which have caused the walls above to fall down. The walls of this part of the edifice are constructed of hewn stone, without any signs of ornament. A plain finished moulding runs through the centre; portions of the cornice still remain, with three or four pieces of flat projecting stones, which formed a part of the top finish.

The whole extent of the rear is covered with confused piles of ruins, overgrown with trees. Near by these are fragments of walls and rooms, with a few ornaments yet remaining about them. Some of the rooms appear to have been single, and apart from all other buildings. There are also various mounds in the vicinity.

A few rods south are the remains of a single high wall, with numerous square apertures, like pigeon-holes. Its foundation is elevated; around which the broken walls and ceilings are to be seen. The summits of the neighboring hills are capped with gray broken walls for many miles around. I discovered no hieroglyphics or paintings of any kind; neither the extraordinary skill displayed in the ornamental carvings, as at Chi-Chen.

On my route to these ruins I made digressions from the road, and found, on all sides, numerous remains of walls and ceilings; also, mounds and small pyramids, covered with the wild vegetation of the country. My time being limited to a day, I left these interesting reminiscences of an unknown people under the cover of night, and returned, wearied with my day's labor, to Nohcacab.

The following morning I visited the church with the padre. It is a large, plain building, with cumbrous walls. The stone being nearly white, at a distance gave it the appearance of a Massachusetts cotton-factory. This church is very poor; and its shrines, like many others in the country, are in barbarous taste. As the padre pulled the strings, to throw aside the curtains and show the figures, my simplicity could not avoid thinking of a puppet-show; and more especially so on account of a figure that had attracted my attention on entering from the cloisters, dressed in a swallow-tail coat and striped trousers, and intended, probably, to represent some one of the apostolic brotherhood.

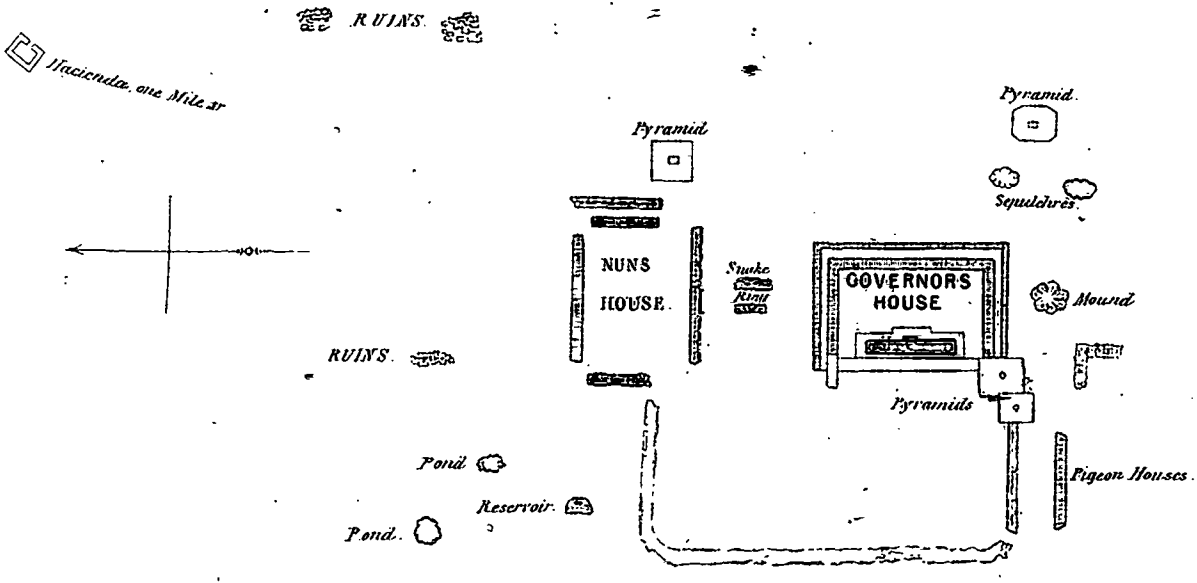
The church stands upon an elevation; and, from the roof, is a charming prospect of the surrounding country. Attached to the building, at one corner, is a high wall, forming an enclosure, in which are deposited the bones of all the dead that had been interred in the body of the church. The tops of the walls are set off with sculls!

The padre is a young man, quite sociable, and he occasionally preaches. When this happens, it is in the Maya language.

The town is small, and has nothing particularly to recommend it to the stranger. It is built upon a shelving rock, a customary site for towns in this province.

At nine o'clock we were again in our saddles for Uxmal,* distant about four leagues. I saw at a distance the ruins of Nohpat; but my haste to reach Uxmal would not allow us to stop. I passed several fine estates on the way before reaching that place. The road was a path cut through the bushes, but easy to travel. I arrived at noon at the hacienda owned by a gentleman at Merida, before mentioned, who kindly had furnished me with a letter to his major-domo; which gave me every facility required to visit the extraordinary ruins in the vicinity. The house of the hacienda had just gone through a complete repair and cleaning, and held out many inducements for me to make my quarters there; but, preferring to be near to the place where I intended to spend my

* Uxmal signifies "Times past."



Plan of the Ruins of Uxmal.

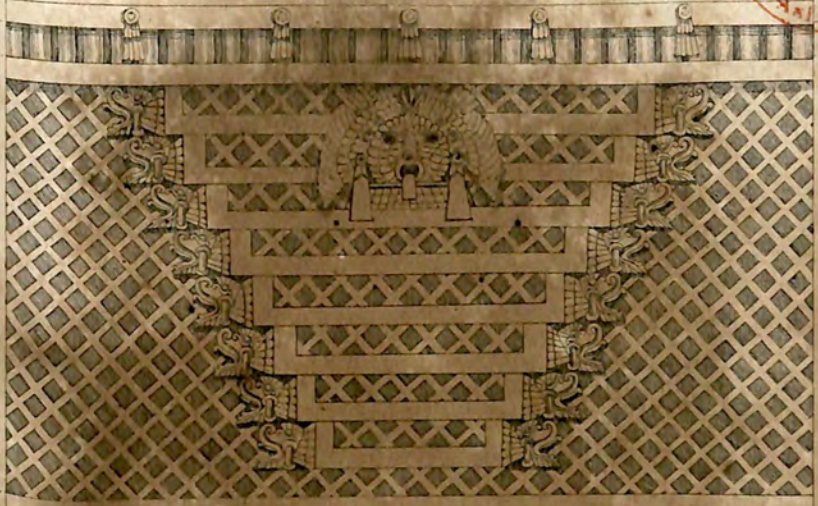
time, I ordered our trappings to be removed to the ruins, distant about one mile, whither I followed. I was at a loss which of the splendid structures to appropriate to my use; but the governor's house had the appearance of being more tenable than all the rest, or perhaps more conspicuous. I chose that for my future place of residence, so I wended my way towards it—passing a grand and lofty pyramid on the right—and scrambled up the broken steps of the southeast angle of my prospective domicil. The governor not being at home, I took quiet possession of three rooms: one for my kitchen, the others for my parlor and bed, or rather, sleeping-room. The rubbish was cleared away, and my furniture, consisting of a table and a chair, with which the major-domo had kindly supplied me, was duly arranged; and some corn, dried pork, lard, sundry eggs, &c., were carefully provided. José selected the most finely finished pieces of ornamented stones which were lying about the door, and silently disposed them around the parlor as seats for the accommodation of company. We then felt ourselves perfectly at home, and ready to receive our friends as soon as they might be pleased to wait upon us. From our door we could see, on our right, beautiful hills undulating like the ground-swell of the sea; on the left, the Cordilleras, looking down with an air of great complaisance upon the plain beneath. Nature is renewing the fields far as the eye can reach; while in the foreground are the time-defying monuments of other days, garlanded with luxuriant shrubs and flowers, to sustain

which they had been compelled to give up their own symmetry and beauty. It was nature in her second childhood.

The GOVERNOR'S HOUSE* is a vast and splendid pile of ruins. It stands upon three ranges of terraces; the first of which is a slight projection, forming a finish. The great platform, or terrace above it, measures upwards of five hundred feet long, and four hundred and fifteen broad. It is encompassed by a wall of fine hewn stone thirty feet high, with angles rounded, still in good preservation. In the centre of this platform, upon which trees and vegetation grow in profusion, stands a shaft of gray limestone in an inclined position, measuring twelve feet in circumference and eight in height; bearing upon its surface no marks of form or ornament by which it might be distinguished from a natural piece. Near by is a rude carving of a tiger with two heads; also, I saw excavations near them with level curbings and smoothly finished inside, which are conjectured to have been cisterns or granaries. Along the southern edge of this platform are the remains of a range of small pillars, now broken and in confusion.

Upon the north-west corner of this platform is an edifice, which was, no doubt, from its location, connected with the Governor's House. It is the smallest of all the ruins. Its ornaments are few and plain; the most remarkable of which is a continuous line of turtles, cut from stone of about a foot square, arranged under the cornices.

* The names (though misnomers) of these structures originated with the people of the country.



SECTION OF FAÇADE, GOVERNOR'S HOUSE.

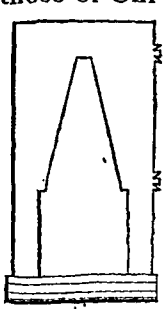
UXMAL RUINS.

Restored after Waldeck

The south-west corner has connected with it two piles of loose stones, in the pyramidical form; one eighty, and the other a hundred feet high, the sides of the bases measuring about two hundred feet. Their tops are broad platforms, over which, and down the sides, are scattered the remains of edifices, of which these pyramids were once probably the foundations. Here we found pieces of pottery, consisting of broken pieces of vases, and supposed cooking utensils.

Upon the main terrace stands another of smaller dimensions, constituting the foundation of the Governor's House. The measurement of this terrace is three hundred and thirty-eight feet long, eighty-two broad, and thirty high, having a majestic flight of stone steps, though considerably broken at the centre, in front of the entrance.

This majestic pile faces the east, is two hundred and seventy-two feet long, thirty-six broad, and twenty-four high. The whole building is plain (unlike those of Chi-Chen) from the base to the mouldings,



which run through the centre over the doorways; above which, to the top, are ornaments and sculptured work in great profusion, and of the most rich, strange, and elaborate workmanship. It is divided into double ranges of rooms, from front to rear. Two of the principal are situated in the centre, fifty-five feet long, ten broad, and about nineteen high, with an angular ceiling, occupying one-half of the whole. There are

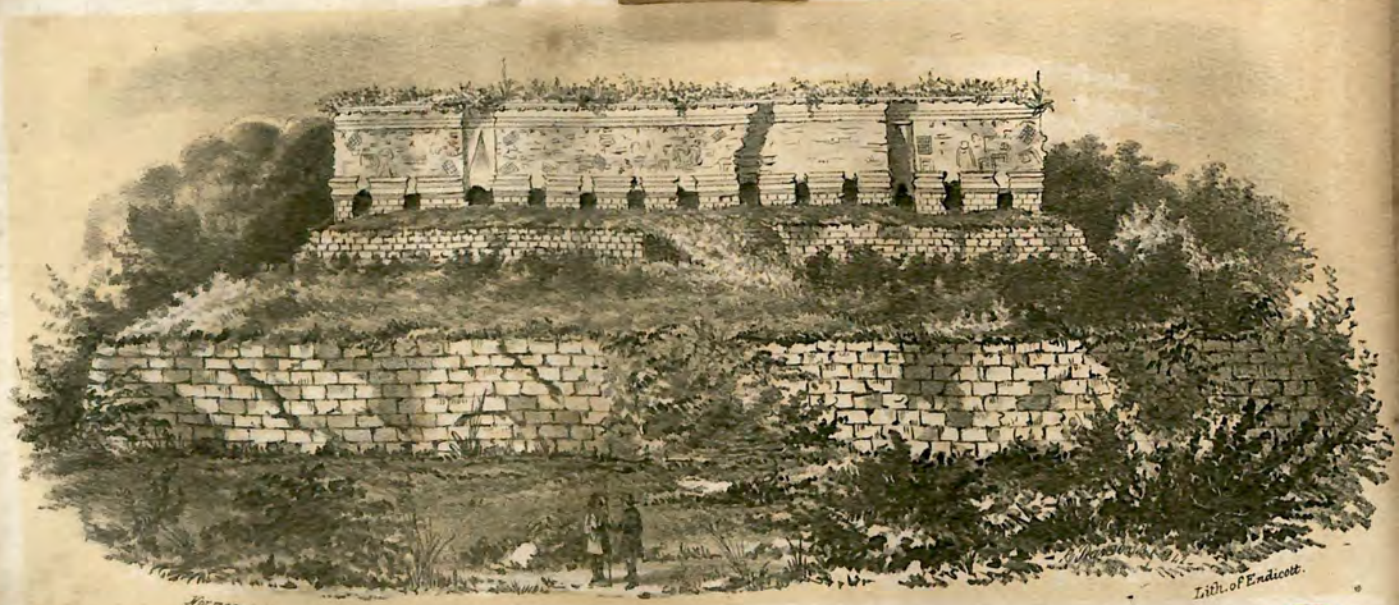
fourteen other rooms in the front and rear; also, two rooms on each end, and one in front and rear of the two recesses, of about one-half of the average size.

The interior of these rooms is sometimes covered with a beautiful hard finish, and at others presents a surface of uniform square blocks of smooth stone. The floors are of stone, covered with a hard composition, which, together with the stone, is now much broken.

The lintels, which are of zuporte wood, are decayed and broken, to which, in a great degree, the falling of the walls may be attributed. The inner sides of the doorways are pierced, and hooks attached, whereon doors were probably swung. There are, also, apertures in the walls, where beams rested, to support hammocks, some of which still remain, and show the marks of the cords. There were no fresco, or other painting or decorations of any kind in the interior of the building to be discerned.

The front presents the most remarkable architectural skill to be found about the building. The walls were of the most durable kind of limestone; and upwards of three feet thick, of fine hewn stone, laid with the greatest care. There were eleven doorways besides those of the recesses. The finish of the angles, generally, was as smooth as though the material were cut with a sharp knife.

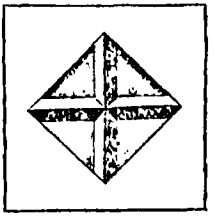
The ornaments were composed of small square pieces of stone, shaped with infinite skill, and insert-



GOVERNORS HOUSE.

UXMAL RUINS.

ed between the mortar and stone with the greatest care and precision. About two-thirds of the ornaments are still remaining upon the façade. The most elaborate were over the centre or main entrance. These have fallen; and now are a heap of ruins at the base. One of them was a figure of a man, with a head-dress of feathers and tassels; part of which still remains, with lines of hieroglyphics underneath.



The ground-work of the ornaments is chiefly composed of raised lines, running diagonally, forming diamond or lattice-work, over which are rosettes and stars; and, in bold relief, the beautiful Chinese border.

From the centre of the building to the recess, at the northern extremity of the building, the ornaments have mostly crumbled off, and are now lying at the base in ruins; and the other parts, contiguous, seem ready to follow the example. The rear of this edifice is more plainly finished; the main part of the centre has fallen.

Over the principal doorway are the remains of a female figure, in a sitting posture. The hands and legs have fallen. It has a fine head-dress of cap and tassels, and neck ornaments. The waist looks quite natural, and the whole was finely finished. On each side of this figure was hieroglyphical writing. The inner rooms of the centre of the Governor's House still show the places of

excavations, made some years ago, by the curate of Ticul.

The extensive pile of ruins designated as the NUNS' HOUSE, is situated a few rods distant, in a northerly direction from the Governor's House. It comprises four great ranges of edifices, placed on the sides of a quadrangular terrace, measuring about eleven hundred feet around, and varying in height from fifteen to twenty-four feet, its sides corresponding to the cardinal points. The principal entrance is through an acute-angled arch doorway, in the centre of the southern range, through which I entered into a spacious court. This range is upwards of two hundred feet long, twenty-five broad, and sixteen high; containing eight rooms on either side of the principal entrance, which are now in good preservation. The inner and outer façades are variously ornamented. Among these I observed signs, symbolical of deities and of Time, as represented to us as symbolized among the ancient Mexicans whose customs have reached us.

The opposite, or northern range, by its superior elevation, and more elaborate work, was evidently the principal portion of this immense structure. Its foundation, which was twenty-four feet high, is now much broken. It has contained rooms and corridors, the walls and pillars of which are still remaining. This range has a wide terrace, or promenade, in front; which, from its elevated position, overlooks the whole ruins. The front wall presents five doorways, the lintels and sides of which have fallen, and filled up

THE NUNS HOUSE,
UXMAL RUINS.

LIBRARY

the rooms with their crumbling ruins. It measures about two hundred and forty-six feet in length, and twenty-five in width, and its height is now only about twenty-six feet. Something like one-third of the ornaments upon the façade yet remain, which bear evidence of great power of combination, and extraordinary skill in the building. No part of the edifice, however, is perfect.

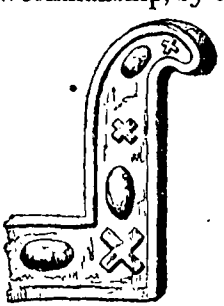
The east and west ranges stand upon foundations which are ten feet high. The ranges are about one hundred and forty feet in length, thirty-four in breadth, and twenty-five in height, having four doorways, divided into eight rooms each. Those of the east are in good preservation — those of the west are much fallen and broken. The largest one of the rooms lies on the east side, and measures thirty feet by twelve. The others range about twelve by eighteen; having ante-rooms on either side, nine by twelve. The height of the ceiling is uniform throughout, and the walls are finished with a clean, white, hard substance. The finish and style, as well as the arrangement of the ornaments, on all sides of these walls, are different. They are much broken, and many pieces are lost, which renders it quite impossible to get at the designs.

The northern front, no doubt, was the principal one, as I judge from the remains, as well as from the fact, that it is more elevated than the others. The southern range is more plain, both in its front and rear. The eastern façade is filled with elaborate ornaments, differing entirely from the others, and better

finished. The western façade is much broken. The remains of two great serpents, however, are still quite perfect; their heads turned back, and entwining each other, they extend the whole length of the façade, through a chaste ground-work of ornamental lines, interspersed with various rosettes. They are put together by small blocks of stone, exquisitely worked, and arranged with the nicest skill and precision. The heads of the serpents are adorned with pluming feathers and tassels, their mouths widely extended, and their tails represent the rattle divisions.

In the rear of, and within a few feet of the eastern range, are the remains of a similar range, which is now almost in total ruins. There appear to have been connecting walls, or walks, from this range to the Pyramid near by, as I judged from the rubbish and stones that can be traced from one to the other.

The outer walls of the northern foundation, which yet remain quite perfect, are not excelled, in point of workmanship, by the work of any artisans of the present day. The outer angles, in particular, are worked with a skill which is almost incredible. Among the great variety of ornaments, with which these edifices abound at present, I discovered a number of large stone hooks, finely carved, and none of them broken. They generally are placed over the doorways, and upon the angles of the buildings, and must have been an important or a favorite ornament, from the con-



THE PYRAMID
STAKE RUINS

spicuous places invariably chosen for them. There are also figures of men, representing Indians, in standing and sitting postures, with long clubs; but they are rude, both in design and execution.

Within these quadrangular edifices is a terrace about six feet wide, extending round the entire court, with flights of steps on all sides, descending to the large court below, which is covered with square blocks of stone, considerably worn. The surface was broken, and covered with earth and vegetation. In the centre of the court is an excavation, in which an immense shapeless stone was discovered, similar to one excavated from the area of the main terrace of the Governor's House.

The PYRAMID is situated about two rods easterly from the ruins of the Nuns' House, to which it appears, in some way, to have been connected. It presents a fine exterior of hewn stone, large at the base, and their sizes diminishing as they approach the platform. The sides are precipitous, much broken, and covered with trees. Its base measures five hundred feet; from the base to the summit or platform, it is one hundred. The summit is reached, on the eastern side, by a flight of a hundred stone steps, each one foot high, and about six inches deep; making the ascent quite difficult, although the steps are still in good preservation.

The area of the platform measures seventy-two feet in length and twenty-one in width, and is occupied by an edifice sixty feet long, twelve wide, and twenty high; having two rooms both on the east and

on the west sides, and one on either end. These rooms are much defaced, and their doorways dilapidated. The eastern front has two doorways, and two small pavilions projecting six or eight inches from the façade, supported by plain pilasters.

The western façade is ornamented with human figures similar to *caryatides*, finely sculptured in stone with great art. Their heads are covered with a casque, and ear ornaments similar to those worn by the Egyptians. They have girdles around their bodies. On the western side, immediately in front of the doorway, is a platform, or roof of a room, the base or floor of which includes about twenty feet of the inclined side of the Pyramid; leading to which is a broken plane, once occupied by the steps. Here are two rooms, one of which is of an unusually large size, with a proportionate doorway, fronting the Nuns' House. The interior of these rooms was finely finished with smooth stone. There appeared to be no communication from them with any other part. The front and sides of the exterior were filled with sculptured work of the most elaborate and incomprehensible description. The same degree of skill and precision was perceptible here that distinguishes the whole ruins.

Below these rooms, at or near the base of the side, are others, where excavations have been made. They are now much broken, and covered with the fallen ruins.

A few rods distant, in a southwest direction from the Governor's House, are the remains of an exten-

THE PIGEON HOUSES;
UXMAL RUINS.

sive range, or succession of ruins. They, probably, were once of no inconsiderable importance in the place. They are composed of terraces, walls, rooms and corridors, and court-yards.

The principal ruin fronts the north, and, probably, was connected with the Governor's House. A wall of two hundred feet remains standing upon a foundation of ten feet. Its width is twenty-five feet; having ranges of rooms in both sides, only parts of which remain. This wall has an acute-angled arch doorway through the centre, similar to that of the Nuns' House, with rooms on both sides. The top of this wall has numerous square apertures through it, which give it the appearance of pigeon-holes; and its edge is formed like the gable-end of a house, uniformly notched. In front of this wall appears to have been an immense court or square, enclosed by stone walls, leading to the Nuns' House. The interior of this square, apparently, shows the ruins of walls and rooms and walks; but nothing definite could be made out, as the ruins were almost level with the ground, and overgrown with trees and grass. At intervals, along the outer wall, in a northwest direction, the ruins of rooms were seen, evidently a regular succession of them.

In the rear of the principal wall is another court or square, but much smaller than that in front, having broken corridors, and the sides running back to an artificial elevation of about fifty feet; the form of which was lost, owing to the dilapidation of the sides and angles. Ruins of rooms and corridors, both at

its base and summit, were perceptible. Other squares can be defined by the broken walls contiguous to these extensive ruins; also, numerous mounds; one of which, discovered west of the Nuns' House, is found to be an immense reservoir or cistern, having a double curb; the interior of which was beautifully finished with stucco, and in good preservation. Some of these mounds have been excavated, as I have already mentioned, and seemed to have been intended originally for sepulchres.

In the centre of the avenue between the Governor's House and the Nuns' House, in a line with the principal doorway of the latter building, are the ruins of two walls, running parallel with each other, north and south, about twelve feet apart. The eastern and inner side shows the remains of a serpent along its façade, similar to that of the Nuns' House—a small portion, however, only remains. It also shows rooms and ceilings quite level with the ground. The western wall is more perfect, and has a ring inserted in its façade, like those of Chi-Chen; but, instead of ornaments, presents hieroglyphics upon its sides.

The short period to which I was, unfortunately, restricted in the examination of these sublime ruins, (and these remarks will apply to all which have come under my observation,) has permitted me to touch but slightly even upon those which have appeared to be the most prominent. Months might be spent among them, and then one would only have entered upon the threshold of an investigation into their wonders.

A moonlight scene from the Governor's House is one of the most enchanting sights I ever witnessed. The moon had risen about half way up from the horizon, and was now throwing its strong silver light over the whitened façade of *our house.* Castles, palaces, and falling pyramids were distinctly to be traced in the foreground. At a distance, walls and mounds, rising above the green verdure of the land, looked like a multitude of small islands in a calm summer's sea. All was quiet but the chirp of the cricket, or the occasional scream of some night-bird of the wood. It was a scene of natural beauty such as I never have seen realized upon canvass of the artist, or even in the pages of poetry.

CHAPTER IX.

Introductory Facts—Ruins of Yucatan and other parts of Mexico—Ruins of North America—Mississippi and Missouri—Look-Out Mountain—Ohio River—Mount Joliet and others—Indian Races—Ledyard—Bradford—Dr. Morton—Diversity of Opinions—Pyramids of Egypt—Speculations—Vassalage—Comparison—Traditions—Embalming—Priesthood—Siamese—Japanese—Astronomy and Mythology.

THERE are three questions which will very naturally occur to those of my readers who have done me the honor to follow me through the preceding details and statistics:—1st. By whom were these ruins built? 2d. When were they built? And 3d. For what purpose? Before answering the first question it is proper to state, that all the ruins of which mention has been made in the preceding pages, and by Mr. Stephens and by Waldeck, are not a tithe of those still remaining uninvestigated on the American continent, and, perhaps I may add, in the single province of Yucatan. Mounds, tumuli, pyramidal structures, and ruins of cities, have been seen from the southern extremity of South America even to the western side of the Rocky mountains—from Florida to the western lakes. There is every reason to presume that the interior of Yucatan, and other portions of Mexico, contain remains of even a more striking charac-

ter than those it has been my province to describe. The Ohio valley and its vicinage are supposed to have been covered with more than five thousand villages, the largest of which stood near the junction of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers.* Regular and scientifically constructed works of a defensive character, between the Ohio river and the great lakes, are still to be traced; some of which occupied, it is thought, more than one hundred acres of ground.

Look-Out Mountain, which stands a thousand feet above the surrounding country, between the Tennessee and Coos rivers, is one of the Alleghanies. Although the top is nearly level, it gives rise to a river which, after winding some distance, plunges abruptly over a precipice. Immediately below this fall, on each side, are bluffs two hundred feet high; one of which, by the turn of the stream, forms a kind of isolated peninsula. On the summit of this are the remains of a fortification, that follows the curve of the river below for more than thirty-seven rods, and extends to the very brow of the rock. The only descent and access is by a kind of fissure, which reaches to the shore beneath. Thirty feet from the top, intersecting this passage, is a ledge or platform ninety feet long by two to five wide. At this landing are five rooms, cut out of the solid rock. The entrance is small; but within they communicate with each other by doors or apertures. This wonderful excavation has the appearance of being intended as

* Breckenridge.

a place of the last resort for the inmates. From its peculiar position, twenty resolute men might successfully contend against the assault of a numerous army, as not more than one at a time can approach, and the slightest push would hurl an assailant over a precipice of a hundred and fifty feet to certain and instant death. That this is a remnant of antiquity there can be little doubt; and that it has escaped the attention of the curious, is owing, probably, to its retired and almost unknown situation.

On the Ohio river, twenty miles below the mouth of the Wabash, is a remarkable cave, consisting of two rooms, one immediately over the other. The uppermost is accessible by a square opening; and the lowest is twelve rods in length and five in breadth. The interior walls are smooth. The floor is level through the centre, but the sides rise in stony grades, resembling the seats in the pit of a theatre; and leaving little doubt that it had been so arranged to accommodate an audience attending performances or deliberations of some nature. The engravings and hieroglyphics upon the walls are numerous and well executed. Many animals are represented, among which are eight that are now unknown.

There are conical mounds in Ohio of various altitudes and dimensions, some being only four or five feet, and ten or twelve in diameter at the base; while others, farther south, rise even to a hundred feet, and cover many acres of ground. They are generally in the form of a cone. These structures seem to have

been built at various periods; and it would be no matter of surprise if some of them were in existence during the deluge. The materials which compose them appear to be suited to their locations. In those positions where stone was not to be had, they are formed of earth.

At Mount Joliet, near the town of Juliet, on the Illinois river, is probably the largest mound within the limits of the United States. It is raised on a horizontal limestone stratum of the secondary formation, and is sixty feet high; and measures, at the summit, eighty-four rods in length and fourteen in width; and, at the base, it is much larger. In the neighborhood of Rock river (Illinois) the mounds are numerous, and give evidence that there once existed in that vicinity a dense population.

Southeast of the city of Cuanuvaca, on the west declivity of Anchuac, there is an isolated hill, upon the top of which is a pyramid. The whole height is upwards of six hundred feet, and it is five times as large as the tower of Babel. It has five terraces, each of nearly sixty feet in height, covered with solid masonry, upon the top of which rest the artificial works; and the whole is surrounded with a broad deep ditch.

In Peru, on the Cordilleras, at a surprising height, are works still more considerable. From a general resemblance of these structures throughout the whole American continent in their apparent purpose, age, and style of architecture, it is generally presumed that the architects belonged to the same races of na-

tive Indians. I say races, for there are reasons for believing that the American continent has witnessed the growth and extinction of more than one race of men which had advanced to a high state of civilization.

Wirt's impressions are, that three distinct races of men have occupied this country previous to the arrival of the existing white settlers. The monuments of the first or primitive race are regular stone walls, brick hearths, (found in digging the Louisville canal,) medals of copper, silver swords, and implements of iron. These relics, he thinks, belonged to a race of civilized men who must have disappeared many centuries ago. To them he attributes the hieroglyphic characters found on the limestone bluffs; the remains of cities and fortifications of Florida; the regular banks of ancient live oaks near them; and the hard and regular bricks found at Louisville, that were longer in proportion to the width than those of the present day.

To the second race he attributes those vast mounds of earth found throughout the whole western regions, from Lake Erie and Western Pennsylvania to Florida and the Rocky mountains. Some of them contain the skeletons of human beings, and display immense labor. Many of them are regular mathematical figures—parallelograms and sections of circles; showing the remains of gateways and subterraneous passages. Some of them are eighty feet high, and have trees growing on them apparently five hundred years old. The soil upon them differs, generally,

from that which surrounds them; and they are most common in situations where it since has been found convenient to build towns and cities. Many fragments of earthenware, of curious workmanship, have been dug up throughout this vast region; some representing drinking vessels, some human heads, and some idols. They all appeared to be made by the hand, and hardened in the sun. These mounds and earthen implements indicate a race inferior to the first, which were acquainted with the use of iron.

The third race are the Indians now existing in the western territories. In the profound silence and solitude of these western regions, and above the bones of a buried world, how must a philosophic traveller meditate upon the transitory state of human existence, when the only traces of two races of men are these strange memorials! On this very spot generation after generation has stood, has lived, has warred, grown old, and passed away; and not only their names, but their nation, their language has perished, and utter oblivion has closed over their once populous abodes! We call this country the new world. It is old! Age after age, and one physical revolution after another, has passed over it, but who shall tell its history?

Priest has concluded that the Carthaginians, Phœnicians, Persians, Hindoos, Chinese, Japanese, Roman, and Greek nations of antiquity, and others, as well as Europeans after their civilization, had more to do with the peopling of the wilds of America than is generally supposed.

Ledyard, in a letter to Mr. Jefferson, from Siberia, says, "I never shall be able, without seeing you in person, and perhaps not then, to inform you how universally and circumstantially the Tartars resemble the aborigines of America. They are the same people — the most ancient and the most numerous of any other; and, had they not a small sea to divide them, they would all have still been known by the same name. * * * With respect to national or genealogical connexion, which the remarkable affinity of person and manners bespeaks between the Indians on this and the American continent, I declare my opinion to be, without the least scruple, and with the most absolute conviction, *that the Indians on the one and on the other are the same people.*"*

"It appears," says Bradford, "that the red race may be traced, by physical analogies, into Siberia, China, Japan, Polynesia, Indo-China, the Malayan Islands, Hindostan, Madagascar, Egypt, and Etruria. In some of these nations the pure type of the race may be perceived existing at present, in others many of its characters have been changed and modified, apparently by intermarriage; and, in others, its ancient existence is only to be discovered by the records preserved on their monuments."

"We are constrained to believe," says the learned Dr. Morton, "that there is no more resemblance between the Indian and Mongol in respect to arts, architecture, mental features, and social usages, than exists between any other two distinct races of mankind.

* Sparks' Life of Ledyard.

"I maintain that the organic characters of the people themselves, through all their endless ramifications of tribes and nations, prove them to belong to one and the same race, and that this race is distinct from all others. * *. * The evidences of history and the Egyptian monuments go to prove that the same races were as distinctly marked three thousand years ago as they are now; and, in fact, that they are coeval with the primitive dispersion of our species."

Whatever diversity of origin may have existed among the races of Indians whose remains are the burden of our speculations, one thing is certain, that the builders of the ruins of the city of Chi-Chen and Uxmal excelled in the mechanic and the fine arts. It is obvious that they were a cultivated, and doubtless a very numerous people. It is difficult to suppose that any great advance in mechanico-dynamic science could have been made by these people, without some evidence besides their works remaining. Yet it is almost impossible to suppose that those vast erections could have been made by the mere aggregation of men, unaided by science. Herodotus tells us that a hundred thousand men, relieved every three months, were employed in building the pyramid of Cheops in Egypt. Ten years were spent in preparing the road whereon the stones were to be transported, and twenty years more in erecting the edifice. Yet though Cheops had a nation of slaves to do his bidding, and though he employed such multitudes upon this stupendous work, it is generally supposed that he must have been aided by some kind of ma-

chinery more powerful than any thing known at the present day.

It is also pretty obvious that Chi-Chen, and the other cities of Yucatan, were built by a nation of slaves. All the buildings whose remains are now visible, were evidently constructed to gratify the pride of a single man or set of men. They were monuments raised to the glory of the few at the expense of the thousands. They are not the kind of works that the people join in building of their own free-will. They answer no public purpose or convenience. No nation of freemen would spend their money or their labor in that way. We may safely conclude that the doctrines of free government were quite unknown among this ancient people—that they were governed by a despotism, and that they were taxed contrary to their will, for these, the only works which were to memorialize their servitude to posterity.

So much for the builders of these ruins. The next question which occurs, when were they built? is, if possible, more difficult of solution than the one to which I have been speaking.

The only way to get any idea of the age of these ruins is, by comparison with the remains of other cities of whose age we have some knowledge. Measuring their age by such a scale, the mind is startled at their probable antiquity. The pyramids and temples of Yucatan seem to have been old in the days of Pharaoh. Before the eye of the imagination—

"Their lonely columns stand sublime,
Flinging their shadows from on high,
Like dials, which the wizard Time
Had raised to count his ages by."

The reader is already sufficiently familiar with the general structure of the buildings which we have attempted to describe, and the present condition of their ruins. He will remember that there are walls there now standing, fifteen feet thick and more, built with an art and strength which defy both competition and decay; that there is one pyramid upwards of a hundred feet in height, with a building upon its summit, which supports trees that are planted in soil deposited from the atmosphere for the last thousand years or more. Let the reader compare these ruins, in their present condition, with the Cloaca Maxima of Rome. More than twenty-five hundred years have elapsed since this work was constructed, to drain off the waters of the Forum and the adjacent hollows to the Tiber, and there it stands to this day without a stone displaced, still performing its destined service. How many years before it will present the ruinous aspect of the "Temple" of Chi-Chen? Evidently the city of Chi-Chen was an antiquity when the foundations of the Parthenon at Athens, and the Cloaca Maxima at Rome, were being laid. Compare with the ruins of Central America the conspicuous remains of Balbeck, of Antioch, of Carthage—shall I not add, of Tadmor, of Thebes, of Memphis, and of Gizeh, their Pyramids, their Labyrinths, their Obelisks, and Sepulchres. Who shall say that while

the servile workmen of Cheops or Cephrinus were sacrificing the lives of countless multitudes of men, to prove that the gods were not alone immortal, and to rear for themselves imperishable burial-places, that at the same time, on another continent, thousands of miles from the Egyptian house of bondage, a people of a different race, unknowing and unknown to history, were not laying the foundations of cities and of palaces and of temples, less stupendous perhaps, but no less a wonder and a mystery to succeeding nations? It is not for any man now to place a limit to the age of the American ruins; but one thing will be evident to every one who shall look at the more ancient of those in Yucatan, that they belong to the remotest antiquity. Their age is not to be measured by hundreds, but by thousands of years.

With regard to the purpose of these ruins, I can add little to the suggestions which have already been made during the progress of my narrative. They were, without a doubt, built primarily for the honor and glory of the rulers of the country. They are, as Pliny very justly says, when speaking of the similar achievements of the Eastern tyrants, "*Regum pecuniæ otiosa ac stulta ostentatio.*" Their secondary purposes, doubtless, were to be used as palatial residences, imperishable sepulchres for the dead, and temples for religious worship. It is impossible to suppose that any of the ruined buildings of which I have given a description could have been intended for private abodes, or could have been constructed by private enterprise. On the contrary, not a vestige of

the ordinary houses in which the masses might have been supposed to reside, remain. Every memorial of the people is gone, save the splendid structures which they erected to gratify the pride of their kings and their priests.

In this connexion it may not be impertinent to allude to some of the religious opinions and ceremonies of the South American nations, which may throw light upon the topic under consideration.

Almost all the Indian tribes, even to the Charibs, have a traditionary account of the deluge and of the creation; and, what is more singular, relate it as occurring in or near their present locations upon this continent—leading to the supposition of an antediluvian existence in America. They also have their great supernatural benefactors. The Brazilians have the Payzome, the Tamanac race their Amalivaca, the Chilians their Them, the Muyscas their Bochica, the Peruvians their Manco Capac, the Mexicans their Quetzalcoatl, and the Chiapasans their Votan. This latter people represent Noah under the name of Coxox.

The art of embalming seems to have been perfectly well known to the people who once inhabited the west, which shows that they were not the same with the roving Indians of later date.* The practice of burning the dead, which prevailed to a great extent in Asia and other parts of the world, was customary among all the more civilized tribes. Their usual method of burial was in the sitting posture.† Dr

* Priest. † Bradford's Am Ant

Morton says, that "no offence excites greater exasperation in the breast of the Indian than the violation of the graves of his people; and he has been known to disinter the bones of his ancestors, and bear them with him to a great distance, when circumstances have compelled him to make a permanent change of residence. The practice of inhumation is so different from that practised by the rest of mankind, and at the same time so prevalent among the American natives, as to constitute another means of identifying them as parts of a single and peculiar race. This practice consists in burying the dead in a sitting posture; the legs being flexed against the abdomen, the arms also bent, and the chin supported on the palms of the hands."

All the civilized Americans had a priesthood, and circumcision was practised by the Mayas of Yucatan, the Calchaquis of Caho,* and Mexicans,† who worshipped the sun and stars, believing that departed souls became stars. Water was held to be sacred for religious ablution — and the mounds are generally found near it, or have the means of being well supplied. Adair assures us that the Choctaws called the old mounds "Nanne-Yah," "The Hills or Mounts of God;" a name almost identical with the Mexican pyramids. In Mexico, the Teocalli, or "Houses of God," or Houses of the Sun, (for the word "Teolt," the appellation of the Supreme Being, was also used to denote that luminary,) were regular terraced pyra-

* Prof. Rafinesque. † De Solis.

mids, supporting chapels, which contained the images of their idolatry. The temples of the sun and moon, in Mexico, resemble similar temples among the ancient Romans. The sun was worshipped at Emesa, says Gibbon, under the name of Elagabalus, under the form of a black conical stone, which, it was universally believed, had fallen from heaven on that sacred spot.

The Siamese and Javanese divide their weeks similar to the Mexicans, the first, like theirs, being market-day; and their cycles, like the Maya age, consisted of twenty years. This was a custom with them previous to any connexion with the Hindoos.* The belief of the Mayas and Mexicans, that the world would be destroyed at the end of one of their ages, coincides singularly with the same impression among the Egyptians, according to Herodotus, when they saw the sun descend from the Crab toward Capricorn. In the festival of Isis, when the orb began to re-appear, and the days grew longer, they robed themselves in white garments, and crowned themselves with flowers.

The movements of the Pleiades were observed by most of the primitive nations, says Pritchard, and not less so by the southern and central Indians. It is an Egyptian legend that the body of Osiris (the moon) was cut to pieces by Typhon (the sun.) So, likewise, in the Mexican mythology, the woman serpent (the moon) is said to be devoured by the sun; a fabulous allusion to the changes of the moon. In Mexico the

* Crawford's Siam.

woman serpent, or moon, was styled the "mother of our flesh;" so, in Egypt, that luminary was called the "mother of the world." The Mexicans, Peruvians, Araucanians, the Canadian and Huron Indians; as, also, the Chinese, Malays, and Hindoos, in cases of eclipses of the sun or moon, shot off arrows at them, made hideous noises, caused dogs to bark and howl, and in every possible way struggled to separate the two antagonists.

Thus much with regard to the impressions left upon my mind respecting the origin and purpose of these ruins. I make no apology for their vagueness. It would be presumptuous to attempt to have any definite ideas upon the subject. But in order to afford the reader every facility for forming clearer views, if possible, than myself, I have collected and subjoin in another chapter, a mass of historical information connected with the subject before me, selected from the writings of the most recent, sagacious, and faithful travellers, who have left us any record of their studies. These extracts present all the most important facts known of the early inhabitants of Mexico. How far history can assist the antiquary in his investigations of this subject, may be pretty satisfactorily judged by consulting the following chapter.

CHAPTER X.

Waldeck's Remarks on Uxmal—Ancient Tools—Soil and Health—Ancient Customs—End of Time—The Coronation of an Emperor—Religious Beliefs—Marriage Ceremony—Infant Baptism—Origin of those Rites—Horse Worship—Amusements—Markets—Idols—Candidates for Matrimony—Their Worship Varies—Refinements.

In respect to the ruins of Uxmal, Waldeck remarks, that "nothing is in stucco—all is in well-worked stone. Cogolludo and Gutierre have confounded Palenque with Uxmal, and Uxmal with Copan. The edifices of Palenque, except the palace, are of small dimensions—those of Uxmal are, comparatively, colossal, and all constructed of hewn stone. The pyramid is called the Conjurer's Tower, and is the highest of five seen by the author. He considers it a place originally devoted to sacrifices. The Asiatic style is easily recognised in the architecture of this monument. It is ornamented by the symbolic elephant upon the rounding corners of the building. The trunk is yet visible on the east side, though the whole figure is much broken on the west side. It is to be regretted that the figure is not entire. The legs, for the most part, are wanting. There are some statues in basso-relievo, very natural; and in some

respects very correctly designed. Above all, in the ornaments, we must admire the patience of the workmen, and the taste of those ancient people, so rich in monumental wealth. Blue and red are the only colors distinguishable upon the walls. The carvings, which ornament the façades of some of the edifices of Uxmal, deserve the careful attention of artists and savans. When they carefully examine the squares, which compose those beautiful embellishments, they will be convinced that their designers had a profound knowledge of the principles of geometry. I have measured all the details by plumb and line, and have found them to conform to each other with perfect accuracy in all their parts."

No iron implements, or tools of any description, have been discovered here; nor was I successful in finding anything of the kind at Chi-Chen. Flint was undoubtedly used. This stone is capable of being formed with a most delicate natural edge, which is as durable, in the working of limestone, as that of steel.

The soil about Uxmal is rich, principally of a red sand loam, capable of producing corn, tobacco, and almost any other product that the limited industry of its inhabitants may be disposed to cultivate. The face of the land is somewhat undulating, and free of that flat monotonous appearance which may be considered as almost an affliction to a great portion of this province. There are ponds in the vicinity; which, taken in connexion with the rank vegetation which borders them, engender considerable sickness

during the months of autumn. The timber throughout Yucatan is of a stinted growth.

Antonio de Solis, the author of the "History of the Conquest of Mexico," a work of even classical merit, written at a period when he could have access to all the facts, gives some of the peculiar customs of the natives of Mexico that may be very properly noticed here; as they may throw some light upon the subject when the matter is brought to the reflection of those who are more competent than I am to draw conclusions. Some allowance should be made for the religious prejudices of the age in which this book was produced, and of its author. De Solis says that the Mexicans adjusted their calendar by the motion of the sun, making his altitude and declination the measure of times and seasons. They allowed to their years three hundred and sixty-five days, and divided them into eighteen months of twenty days each; leaving the five overplus days to come in at the end of the year, which were celebrated as holydays. Their weeks consisted of thirteen days, with different names marked in their calendar by images. The "age" or cycle, in their calendar, was four weeks of years, marked by a circle, which they divided into fifty-two degrees, allowing a year to each degree. In the centre of this circle they painted the sun, from whose rays proceeded four lines of different colors, which equally divided the circumference, leaving thirteen degrees to each semi-diameter; and these divisions served as signs of their zodiac, upon which their ages had their revolutions, and the sun

his aspects, prosperous or adverse, according to the colors of the lines. In a large circle, enclosing the other, they marked, with their figures and characters, the accidents of the age, and all circumstances which had happened worthy of being remembered. These secular maps were public instruments, which served for a proof of their history. It may be remarked among the wisest institutions of their government, that they had official historiographers, whose duty it was to preserve for posteritv the exploits of their nation.

They had a superstition that the world was in danger of destruction at the last day of the "age" of fifty-two years; and all the people prepared themselves for that dreadful and ultimate calamity. They took leave of the light with tears, and expected death without any previous sickness. They broke their household vessels as unnecessary lumber, extinguished their fires, and walked about like disturbed people, without daring to take any rest, till they knew whether they were to be for ever consigned to the regions of darkness. On the dawning of day they began to recover their spirits, with their eyes fixed towards the east; and, at the first appearance of the sun, they saluted him with all their musical instruments, and congratulated each other upon their security for the duration of another age. They immediately crowded to their temples to render thanks to their gods, and to receive from the priests new fire, which had been preserved by them throughout the night. Next, they made a new provision for their

necessary subsistence, and this day was spent in public rejoicings; the diversions being dedicated to the renewal of time, much after the manner of the secular games among the Romans.

Their emperor, who was chosen by electoral princes upon the death of his predecessor, receives the crown upon very precise conditions. He is obliged to take the field with the forces of the empire, and obtain some victory over his enemies, or subdue some rebels or some neighboring province, before he can be crowned, or permitted to ascend the royal throne. So soon as the victorious prince was found to be qualified for the regal dignity by the success of his enterprise, he returned triumphantly to the city, and made his public entry with great state and solemnity. The nobility, ministers, and priests accompanied him to the temple of war, where, after he had offered the customary sacrifices, the electoral princes clothed him in the royal robes; arming his right hand with a sword of gold, edged with flint, the ensign of justice, and his left with a bow and arrows, signifying his power and command in war. Then the first elector, the king of Tezcuco, placed the crown upon his head. After this, one of the most eloquent magistrates made a long harangue, wishing him joy of the dignity in the name of the whole empire; and added some documents, representing the troubles and cares that attend a crown, with the obligations he lay under to guard the public good of his kingdom; recommending to him the imitation of his ancestors. This speech being ended, the chief of the priests approach-

ed him with great reverence, and between his hands the emperor took the oath with great solemnity. He swore to maintain the religion of his ancestors; to observe the laws and customs of the empire; to treat his vassals with lenity; that, during his rule, they should have seasonable rains; and that no inundations of rivers, sterility of soil, or malignant influence of the sun, should happen.

Amidst such a multitude of gods as they worship, they still acknowledge a superior deity, to whom they attribute the creation of the heavens and the earth.* This first cause of all things was, among the Mexicans, without a name; there being no word in their language whereby to express his attributes. They only signified that they knew him by looking towards heaven with veneration, and giving him, after their way, the attribute of ineffable, with the same religious uncertainty as the Athenians worshipped the Unknown God. They believed in the immortality of the soul, and in future rewards and punishments. They buried great quantities of gold and silver with their dead, in a belief that it was necessary to bear their expenses through a long and troublesome journey. They put to death some of their servants to accompany them; and it was a common thing for wives to consummate the exequies of their husbands by their own deaths. Princes were obliged to have monuments of vast extent, for the greatest part of their riches and family were interred with them;

* Montezuma, in reply to Cortes, says, "In regard to the creation of the world, our beliefs are the same."—*Bernal Diez.*

both the one and the other in proportion to their dignity and grandeur. The whole of the servants were obliged to accompany the prince into the other world, together with some flatterers among them; who, at that time, suffered for the deceit of their profession.

The marriage was a kind of contract, with some religious ceremonies. The preliminary articles being all agreed upon, the couple appeared in the temple, and one of the priests examined their inclinations by certain formal questions, appointed by law for that purpose. He then took the tip of the woman's veil with one hand, and one corner of the husband's garment in the other, and tied them together at the ends, to signify the interior tie of their affections. Thus they returned to their habitation, accompanied by the same priest; where, imitating the Romans with regard to their *dii Lares*, or household gods, they paid a visit to the domestic fire, which they believed concerned in the union between the married pair. They went round it seven times, following the priest; after which they sat down to receive their equal share of the heat, and this accomplished their marriage. They registered in a public instrument the portion brought by the bride, every part whereof the husband was obliged to restore in case they parted, which very frequently happened; for mutual consent was judged to be a sufficient cause for a divorce; a case in which the laws never interfered. When once thus dissolved, it was inevitable

death for them to come together again. Inconstancy was punished with the utmost rigor.

Their new-born infants were carried to the temples with solemnity, and the priests received them with certain admonitions concerning the troubles to which they were born. If they were the sons of nobles, they put a sword into the child's right hand, and upon his left arm a shield, kept in the temple for that purpose. If of plebeian extraction, they put into their hands mechanical instruments; and the females, of both degrees, had only the distaff and spindle, signifying to each the kind of employment which destiny had prepared for them. This ceremony over, they were brought to the altar, and there, with a thorn of maguey, or a lancet of flint, they drew some drops of blood from the privy parts; after which they either sprinkled them with water, or dipped them into it; using, at the same time, certain invocations. This appears to be a striking imitation of baptism and circumcision, which De Solis very piously attributes to the devil; who, he also says, introduced among these barbarians the confession of sins, giving it to be understood that thereby they obtained the favor of their gods. He (the devil) likewise instituted a sort of communion, which the priest administered upon certain days of the year; dividing into small bits an idol made of flour and honey, mixed into a paste, which they called the god of Penitence. They had jubilees, processions, offerings of incense, and the other forms of divine worship. They even gave their chief priests the title of *papas* in their

language; which, together with other imitations of the Catholic church, the author thinks must have cost Satan a deal of close study and perseverance!

The rest of the rites and ceremonies of "these miserable heathen were shocking and horrible both to reason and nature; bestialities, and incongruous, stupid absurdities; which seemed altogether incompatible with the regularity and admirable economy which were observed in the other parts of the government, and would scarcely be believed were not history full of examples of the like weaknesses and errors of men in other nations, and in parts of the world where they have the means of being more enlightened. Sacrifices of human blood began about the same time with idolatry. The horrible and detestable custom of eating human flesh has been practised many ages since among the barbarous people of our hemisphere, as Galatia confesses in her antiquities; and Scythia, in her Anthropophagi, must acknowledge the same. Greece and Rome wanted the knowledge of true religion, and were complete idolaters; although, in everything else, they gave laws to the whole world, and left edifying examples to posterity." He therefore concludes that the Mexican worship was no other than a detestable compound of all the errors and abominations which have been received among the Gentiles in different parts of the world.

Don Solis would not enter into a detail of their particular festivals and sacrifices, their ceremonies, sorceries, and superstitions; not only because they

are met at every step, with tedious repetitions, in the histories, but because it is his opinion that too much caution cannot be observed in restricting the pen upon a subject of this nature; at best to be looked upon as an unnecessary lesson, affording the reader little pleasure and much less profit.

With all due deference to the erudition and moral feelings of the author above, so largely quoted, I doubt whether information of consequence might not be obtained from the minutiæ of these ceremonies, trifling as they appear, that would be of importance to the future historian. If the exploits of these nations had been handed down even in the writings of those "capable historiographers," it would have been some consolation for the absence of any better authority.* The suppression of these records we cannot pardon — the natives erred through ignorance; their conquerors, from a policy only worthy of the darkest ages. They not only destroyed what they confess to be a wise and excellent government, but they buried in oblivion the very name of the people they so mercilessly obliterated from a national (it may almost be said from an earthly) existence.

Waldeck, in referring back to the time that Cortes was in Tobasco, gives an account of a sick horse left with the Indians by that almost worshipped commander; which, under the rich and unnatural food they furnished him, very naturally famished. Some say he was fed with grains of gold; the natives judg-

* "They had books made of the bark of trees, in which were noted down the records of past times."—*Bernal Diez.*

ing, from the prevailing passion of his former masters, that this would be his most satisfactory diet. He died, poor horse, however, as might have been anticipated, under their unfortunate attentions; but the consequences did not end here. They erected an elegant temple to his memory, deified him, and placed him among the most prominent of their gods, where he received their faithful and regular devotions. In after years, the missionaries and Spanish priests had more difficulty to dissuade them from the worship of this horse, which they called Tzimin,* than they had from all their other gods. From this circumstance, it appears that this temple must have been built after the conquest; and, as it possesses architectural beauty in no respect inferior to the temples of a more ancient date, we may infer that the same race of people that produced it, may have been the architects of the most elaborate works among the ruins.†

Bernal Diez, a companion of Cortes, who has

* An evil genius of hideous appearance, that, it was believed, would devour the world.

† "The natives of these countries have learned trades, and have their shops, manufactories, and journeymen, and gain their livelihood thereby. The gold and silver smiths work both in cast metal and by the hammer; and excel, as do the lapidaries and painters. The engravers execute first-rate work with their fine instruments of iron, especially upon emeralds; wherein they represent all the acts of the holy passions in such a manner, that those who had not seen them execute it, would not have believed such to have been done by the hand of an Indian. The sons of the chiefs used to be grammarians; and were learning very well until they were forbidden by the holy synod, under an order from the Archbishop of Mexico. They excel in all manufactures, not excepting that of tapestry."—*Bernal Diez.*

written a particular account of the conquest, but not with the elegance of De Solis, is very minute in describing the great temples in Mexico, the gods, and the rich splendor of the city. One part of it was occupied by Montezuma's dancers; some of whom bore sticks on their feet, others flew in the air, and others danced like *matachines*. The gardens of the great Indian prince were very extensive, irrigated by canals of running water, and shaded with every variety of trees. In them were baths of cut stone, pavilions for feasting or retirement, and theatres for shows and for the dancers and singers; all of which were kept in the most exact order by laborers employed for the purpose.

The market was held upon the grand square. Here, in places prepared for the purpose, was every kind of merchandise in use among them; consisting of gold, silver, jewels, feathers, mantles, chocolate, skins, sandals, slaves, and all the varieties of food, cooked and in a raw state. Mechanics, in all branches, here performed their labors; and every thing appeared to be done in the greatest harmony. Judges regularly presided here to decide any disputes, and to see that the laws were duly executed and obeyed.

A circuit was made through a number of large courts (the smallest of which is larger than the great square of Salamanca) before we entered the great temple, which had double enclosures, built of stone and lime, and the courts paved with large white cut stone, very clean; and, where it was not paved, plas-

tered and polished. The ascent to the temple was by one hundred and fourteen steps; from the top of which was a complete view of the city and the surrounding neighborhood. Here were two altars, highly adorned, with richly wrought timbers on the roof; and, over the altars, gigantic figures resembling very fat men. One was Huitzilopochtli, their war god, with a great face and terrible eyes. His figure was entirely covered with gold and jewels, and his body bound with golden serpents. In his right hand he held a bow, and in his left a bundle of arrows. A little idol stood by, representing his page, who bore a lance and target richly ornamented with gold and jewels. The great idol had round his neck the figures of human heads and hearts made of pure gold and silver, ornamented with precious stones of a blue color. On the left was the other large figure, with a countenance like a bear, and big shining eyes of a polished substance (mica) like their mirrors. The body of this idol was also covered with jewels. These two deities were said to be brothers. The name of this last was Tezcatepuca, and he was the god of the infernal regions; and, according to their belief, presided over the souls of men. His body was covered with figures representing little devils, with the tails of serpents. In the summit of the temple, and in a recess, the timber of which was highly ornamented, was a figure half human and the other half resembling an alligator, inlaid with jewels and partly covered with a mantle. This idol was said to contain the germ and origin of all created

things, and was the god of harvests and fruits. These places were exceedingly offensive from the smell of human blood, with which they were besmeared. Here was an enormous drum, (the head was made of the skin of a large serpent,) the sound of which could be heard the distance of two leagues.

At a little distance from this temple stood a tower. At the door were frightful idols; by it was a place for sacrifice; and, within, boilers and pots full of water, to dress the flesh of the victims, which was eaten by the priests. The idols were like serpents and devils, and before them were tables and knives for sacrifice; the place being covered with the blood which was spilt on these occasions. Crossing a court is another temple, wherein were the tombs of the Mexican nobility. Next this was yet another, full of skeletons and piles of bones; each kept apart, but regularly arranged. In each temple were idols and its particular priests; the latter of whom wore long vestments of black, somewhat between the dress of the Dominicans and canons.

At a certain distance from the buildings last spoken of were others, the idols of which were the superintendent deities of marriages; near which was a large structure occupied by Mexican women, who resided there, as in a nunnery, until they were married. They worshipped two female deities, who presided over marriages; and to them they offered sacrifices, in order to obtain good husbands.

Each province had its peculiar gods, who were supposed to have no concern with any other; so

that, in consequence, there were a great multiplicity of idols in the various districts.* Mexico was thought to have attained its zenith at the time Cortes first entered it. The city had risen up in about one hundred and thirty years (from 1388 to 1518) solely by the aid of its military power. As the great temple, however, is said to have existed a thousand years, this assertion is hardly reconcilable with the facts. The Tlascalians not only proved themselves to be as warlike as the Mexicans, but equally qualified as statesmen. They held it as a principle, that "whatever was unlawful, with them, was impossible." At Zempoala books were seen in their temples, containing the rites of their religion, written in imagery or ciphers, as was customary with the painters of Teutile, at Tabasco.† The same kind of writing was noticed at Mexico, done on cotton cloth.

Waldeck says that there exists a history of the original Conquest of Yucatan, written by Villa Gutierre, a copy of which was found in the archives of the cathedral at Merida. This work is very superior to the voluminous and undigested compilation of Cogolludo; at the same time it must be remarked, it carries a similar theological coloring and religious prejudice. So, though Villa Gutierre was neither priest nor monk, he none the less invoked, in each page, the trinity and the saints; and even his book is dedicated to the holy Virgin. This was the madness of the epoch; Spanish and American literature was entirely placed under the auspices of monkish bigots, who wrote their

* Bernal Diez. † De Solis.

histories in the same style as they did the lives of the saints.

Besides these authors there is no other historian of Yucatan. I have an abridged manuscript copy of Cogolludo in my possession; but, from a close examination, it appears to be unworthy of translation. The numerous writers on Mexico are well known to the reader. Baron Humboldt is deservedly the most celebrated who has treated on that subject; and his writings are an honor to the age. But the most remarkable work that has ever probably been produced, is that of the late Lord Kingsborough, on American Antiquities, which is acknowledged to be the most costly undertaking ever attempted by a single individual, of a literary kind. A copy, and the only one in the United States, is in the possession of the Pennsylvania Library, at Philadelphia. The collection of materials was made by Augustine Aglis, who edited and published it in London, in 1830. He has succeeded in "getting up" a splendid book, but the compilation falls short of its merits. It is comprised in seven immense folio volumes, embellished with upwards of a thousand splendid engravings, colored with the greatest neatness and skill. It is said that only about fifty copies were suffered to be struck, to be presented to friends. The plates were then defaced. It cost something like one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to produce this work. This patron of literature and the arts, a short period since, died in the prison of Dublin, a sad instance of self-immolation to his own munificence; his fate being but a melancholy inducement for others to follow his example.

COACH TRAVELLING

CROSSING THE MOUNTAINS FROM UXMAL.

CHAPTER XI.

Departure from Uxmal — Abala — The Road — The Curate's Hacienda — Arrival at Merida — Hotel de Diligencias — Bishop Preaching — Strange Scenes — Parting with José — Departure from Merida — Coach and Passengers — Scenes of the Road — Zibackchen — Accommodations — Arrival at Campeachy.

THE reader will remember that the narrative of my journeyings terminated at Uxmal. I finished making my observations of those ruins, and on the 4th of March embarked in a Yucatan coach and four, (four stout Indians,) crossed the Cordilleras, and the same night slept at the Casa-real at Muna, distant three leagues.

While waiting for my tortillas and eggs, I shall be pardoned for expressing my acknowledgments to the major-domo of the hacienda at Uxmal, to whom I was indebted for many kindnesses; and it will not be amiss to add, that his was one of the best managed estates that I observed in Yucatan.

The hacienda is built of hewn stone, taken principally from the ruins; more of which the Indians are now engaged in bringing away for the improvements the building is at present undergoing. It is about eighty feet front, having one range of rooms, with a high and wide balcony in front and rear, with

a small chapel attached. In front is the cattle-yard, with its stone and mortar troughs for water, and wells and cisterns at the sides; the whole surrounded by a high stone wall, in the front centre of which is an immense arch-way, set off with pinnacled ornaments selected from the ruins.

There are a large number of Indians attached to this hacienda, who appear well; and so does every thing else connected with it. Different from many others, this establishment has an air of comfort and prosperity, much to the credit of those who supervise its concerns. It has its six hundred bee-hives, which are made of hollow logs, cut into lengths of two feet each. They are well arranged under sheds erected for the purpose.—opened monthly, and the honey extracted. They do not yield so much honey, or of so good a quality, neither are the bees as lively as those of the north. Their bees have no sting. Great attention is paid to the preservation of the wax, which is almost a staple in the country, so much is consumed in the religious exercises.

On the following morning we were detained for the want of a mule, and as it had been engaged at an early hour, I felt not a little annoyed at the disappointment. To indemnify myself in some measure, I resolved to look at the town; but it was all like other towns here. That which most attracted my attention was seeing the Indian women, with their leathern buckets, and coils of long rope about their heads, and earthen pots under their arms, going to the well, which is in the centre of the square, to draw water.

I thought of Rebecca—of the custom among the ancient Israelitish women, of performing the same duty—and of the lost tribes; and I wondered if they did not stray this way, and found all these large cities that are now tumbling to dust—and I was lost in reflection, and—lost my way to the Casa-real. Making my course through squatted Indians and these female water-carriers, who had led me out of the path, as they have many a wiser man before, I discovered the stopping-place and waiting mule much easier than a solution to my new theory.

At ten o'clock we were ready once more to set off upon our journey, over a rocky road, taking the former from choice, the latter from necessity. After travelling four leagues, we passed through the small Indian town of Abala. This place has a very neat white church, which was embellished with two turrets, making a pretty appearance amidst the dulness of every thing around it. There being no particular inducement to delay here, we once more took up our march, and, at five o'clock, and two leagues distant, we arrived at an hacienda belonging to one of the principal curates of the province, (Isamul,) where we remained for the night. The house, although plain, was so arranged as to be both convenient and pleasant. It looked quite unlike any of the buildings for similar purposes in the country, but resembled that of one of those comfortable Dutch farm-houses, so common in Pennsylvania. It had a garden unusually well cultivated, and great attention was paid to the fruit trees. I noticed that great attention was given

also to irrigation, and, all things taken into consideration, it struck me as being a place where a man might make himself comparatively happy. Among the inmates of the house I observed a number of beautiful Mestizos, but they did not outnumber those of the curate's house in Valladolid.

At three o'clock, on the following morning, our feet were in the stirrups; and bidding a kind adieu to our host, we were soon upon our rocky path, under the light of a waning moon. It must not be supposed that either the excellence of the road, or the particularly early hour, held out many inducements for leaving such desirable quarters; but I was anxious to reach Merida with the least possible delay. The distance was six leagues to the city, which we reached, after passing through several haciendas, encountering clouds of dust under a scorching sun, on the 6th day of March. The appearance of the streets, as we rode through them, was singular. The stores and houses were closed, and scarcely a person was to be seen. It was evidently the much respected hour of siesta. Clouds of the fine white dust of the streets filled the air. It was like entering a city in the desert of Barca.

I stopped at the "Hotel des Diligences," which had been opened during my absence; and though I could not but feel some compunctions at having thus deserted the amiable Doña Michaelé, yet as she only kept her house purely for the accommodation of strangers, I felt my defection to be less serious. The new hotel was liberally supplied with all the natural advantages that are necessary to make its inmates com-

fortable. It was, in fact, *un hotel Français*, and reminded me strongly of those to be met with upon the borders of Switzerland, which, I am right glad to see, are finding their way into this province. Perhaps there is no part of the world where the traveller is more at a loss for accommodations upon the road, than in Yucatan.

The jaded horses being provided for, I, as is my wont, soon made myself perfectly at home, and as happy as I could. I was not a little rejoiced to find that the hotel was provided with a bathing-room, a luxury of which I was not long in availing myself. I came out completely renovated, and with all convenient speed swung myself into a hammock and forgetfulness.

On Sunday I attended public worship at the cathedral. The bishop delivered his last of an annual series of ten sermons. "Heaven" was the subject of his discourse. The church was well filled; the ladies, of course, and as usual, constituting a majority of the numerous assemblage that attended. They looked exceedingly well, though I could reconcile myself with difficulty to their seating themselves upon the cold stone floor. The words of the bishop, at the remote position which I occupied in the church, were indistinctly heard; and, therefore, I am unable to give any opinion of their merits. One thing is certain, their author looked the prelate to admiration. It was rather an ungentlemanly or thoughtless act of the commanding officer on parade in the adjoining square, to fire a feu-de-joie during the preaching. It

had the effect of putting to rout many of the congregation, and drowning the bishop's voice, very much to his discomfiture. I had entertained much doubt respecting the popularity of the church among the higher order and the better informed people of Yucatan, and this went far to establish it. It is policy, however, to keep it up as it is—but such examples as this have quite a contrary tendency.

For the last ten days the city has presented a singular aspect. Stores have been closing and opening. Processions, military and ecclesiastical, have been the order of the day. Images, of all sizes and distinctions, have been paraded through the public streets, and the churches crowded with women. Prayers were uttered aloud in the public thoroughfares of the city; and places of most resort, filled with both sexes, arrayed in suits of mourning. Government officers received indulgences, and all public labor was suspended. It was the enacting of the scenic shows of the death and rising of our Saviour. At half-past eight o'clock this morning, all the bells (and here are not a few) were put in motion. The Saviour had risen, and all was life—as life is in Merida!

My preparations for leaving Merida were completed. It was now late in the evening, the last night of my stay at Merida; and José had hung about, for one petty excuse or other, although he was sick, with an affectionate reluctance to leave me for the last time. The cause was almost too prominent to

escape notice; and the remembrance of his little frailties, and they were remarkably few, was at once buried in oblivion. He wanted to accompany me home, but his health would not permit; and I was obliged to forego the indulgence of his wishes, and my own inclination to enjoy the advantage of his faithful services. The time has been when I have parted from a good old horse with an agitated bosom, and could less have been expected upon this occasion? The truth must be told; we both shed tears. I felt sincerely sorry to part with him. Poor José, God bless him! all I can do for him now is to give him my kind wishes, and to speak of him as he is—and to say to my countrymen who may visit Merida, that if they want a boy upon whom they can depend to follow them faithfully through the world, José is the lad to do it.

On the 7th of April, after experiencing a touch of the fever, to which all strangers are subjected in this country, I left Merida, by coach, for Campeachy. It started at five o'clock in the morning, with three passengers; an elderly woman and man and myself composing the load. The team galloped off at the rate of ten miles the hour, and changed horses every hour during the route. The coach was one of four which were imported from Troy; and, as a sample, was well worthy of the high reputation the Trojan carriages enjoy throughout the United States; but the horses and harness were in shocking bad keeping.

The driver was an Indian; besides whom were two other attendants, who were needed, for the un-

skilful hands of the Indian, and the wildness of the horses, made the vehicle go on all sides of the road. It was no uncommon occurrence, to be brought up against a stone wall at the side of the road; and, in one instance, we were foul of an Indian hut, which frightened the inmates to such a degree that they ran out, supposing it to be an earthquake. By combining the skill and strength of our whole party, we succeeded in getting the horses and coach again upon the highway.

We stopped at a village to take breakfast, and passed through several towns on the road, but they afforded nothing worthy of remark. The country through which our route lay, presented the same aspect as other parts we had visited. The fields were still covered with weeds, to burn which the proprietors of the soil were only waiting for dry weather. This is the only preparation the soil receives prior to sowing it. The progress of the coach afforded us much amusement, by the fright which it appeared to occasion to all animated nature in our way. This line of coaches had been only a short time established, and its whirling along among people and cattle, had a similar effect that a locomotive has among the animals and their owners in the wilds of the far West. Nothing would stand before it. Away went horse and rider, mule and packs, to secure a safe retreat in the bushes, at the alarming sound of our approach. Our arrival in the town brought out the whole population, and the Indians would come round the coach

aching with curiosity, their countenances expressive both of fear and admiration.

Dinner was procured at a town called Zibackchen, and we remained here, for the want of horses, during the night. Our dining apartment was a billiard-room, where we sat down to a small table, four in all; our conductor making one of the number. Our elderly male companion had evidently seen better days. He was much soured at the appearance of the viands placed before us; and well he might be, for, agreeably to my recollections, they were shockingly bad, and dirty withal. There was but one knife; and that was used for the purpose of scraping the forks; and yet, the charges were most extravagant. This, too, is the depôt, under the personal supervision of the owners of the coaches, as we understood; the principal of whom is the Secretary of State! He, at least, ought to know the fact, and cause the evil to be abated. If I were upon those terms of intimacy that would warrant the freedom, with the kindliest motives, I would not hesitate to inform him of the existence of this crying evil. Our restiff fellow-passenger had spent some little time in New York, and was continually drawing comparisons; and, in his vexation at the things around him, expressed his opinion that Yucatan would never excel that State. This was a point upon which I felt no great disposition to cavil.

I walked through the town at four o'clock. The streets were deserted, the houses closed, and the people in their hammocks. At five, men were lounging

about, and the ladies making their toilet, either at the windows or doors. This is a large town, and well built; but not more than one-half of the houses are occupied.

Early in the evening hammocks were slung in the billiard-room, (the place that had been the scene of our recent dinner,) and all my fellow-passengers and myself, without distinction of party or sex, conductors and Indians, turned in for the night.

At four o'clock, next morning, we were called; chocolate was served, and we were soon off by the light of—our cigars; our lady passenger keeping up the supply from an ample depository in the folds of her hair. The road was extremely stony, but it was now undergoing repairs and improvements. We arrived at Campeachy at nine o'clock; a distance from Merida of forty leagues, and were set down at the Traveller's Hotel, immediately in front of the bay. Here is a fine view of the open roadstead, in which lie at anchor one Havana packet, and some four or five schooners. Near the shore are a number of canoes, engaged in the coasting trade.

CAMPEACHY.

CHAPTER XII.

Reception at Campeachy — The City — Public Buildings — The Convent — The Market — Charity — An Ancient Custom — Population — The College — Foundations of the City — Subterraneous Caverns — The Suburbs — The Harbor — Climate and Health — Various Ruins — The Author's Collection of Idols — Dr. Morton on the Archæology of Yucatan — Other Ruins — Reptiles and Insects — A Concealed Nation — The Brothers Camachos.

My reception at Campeachy was extremely gratifying. There is evidently a class of society here which contrasts favorably with any to be found in the other cities of the province. The streets are narrow and irregular; and have a natural pavement of flat stone, which is much broken, and makes an exceedingly rough route for carriages. The buildings have not the clean appearance of those of Merida, owing to the extreme humidity that accompanies the sea winds; but they display more wealth and taste.

The public buildings on the square are of two stories, and tastefully ornamented and painted. The churches, as usual, are the most conspicuous public works. The private houses, generally, are of one-story, and well painted. There are few good two-story houses in the place.

The convent at Campeachy is a huge mass of stone

and mortar; the walls of which bear the marks of the balls from the cannon of the besiegers of 1840, when the government troops fired upon the town. The cannonading was continued for three days, but without doing much execution! The city was obliged, however, to capitulate, for want of ammunition and supplies.

The market is well furnished with fruit, vegetables, and fish, and the customary supplies of meat generally found in similar establishments throughout Mexico; but articles are much dearer here than in other parts of Yucatan. This is owing, probably, to the great influx of strangers. The greater amount of money thrown into circulation has of course a tendency to enhance the value of the necessaries and luxuries of life, here, as elsewhere.

Every Saturday brings from the country to the streets of this city a horde of Indian beggars, who are not to be seen here upon any other day of the week, and to whom alms are liberally distributed by the inhabitants. This is a custom, no doubt, that is handed down from the time of the conquest. The friars were in the habit of giving charity to the poor on the same day.

The city, including the suburbs outside the walls, contains a population of about fifteen thousand. There is an "alamede" outside these walls, which affords a pretty little place for a walk, and there are pleasant drives around in the neighborhood. There is a college in Campeachy similar to that of Merida, with six professors, the highest salary of any one of

whom is six hundred dollars per annum. There are fifty-five pupils, besides thirteen on the foundation. Like all other literary institutions in this country, it is poorly supported.

The town of Campeachy, built entirely of a calcareous hewn stone, stands upon a foundation of the same substance, which extends throughout the whole peninsula, retreating from the sea-shore with a gradual elevation, until it reaches to the height of five hundred feet, the level of Sierra Alta, near Tecax. This immense rock has doubtless furnished material, before the conquest, for the construction of those stupendous temples, and other magnificent buildings, that now constitute the ruins of this country.

The whole of Campeachy rests upon a subterraneous cavern of the ancient Mayas. It is now difficult to ascertain whether these quarries or galleries, which, according to the traditions of the country, are understood to be immense, served for the abode of the people who executed the work. Nothing reveals the marks of man's sojournings here; not even the traces of smoke upon the vaults were visible. It is more probable that the greater part of this excavation was used as a depository for their dead. This supposition has been strengthened by the discovery of many openings of seven feet deep by twenty inches in breadth, dug horizontally in the walls of the caverns. These excavations, however, are few; and the galleries have been but little investigated and less understood. Even the inhabitants of the dwellings

above know scarcely any thing respecting these dark habitations.

These catacombs occasion frequent accidents. "Some time before my arrival," says Waldeck, "the centre of Moille street caved in. Happily, this gallery did not extend beneath the houses. Arches were erected that brought the street to its original level, by the aid of a French engineer, M. Journot."

The principal suburbs of Campeachy are San Roman to the south of the town, Guadaloupe and San Francisco to the north. Each of these has its church. The city has three churches and five convents.

At the extremity of the San Roman suburb is the general cemetery, around which is a broken wall and a façade, almost in ruins, feebly protecting it from the observation of passengers. During the prevalence of the cholera, this depository was found insufficient to accommodate the numerous patients, and two others were constructed to meet the emergency. These last were surrounded by palisades, and are situated to the right of the road leading to Lerma. Nor did these suffice; sculls and bones were to be seen in heaps above ground.

At some distance from the cemetery is a small battery that the sea washes at high water. About two hundred yards to the right of this is the pest-house, for the accommodation of leprous patients. This establishment is more expensive than useful, as it has been long satisfactorily known that the disease is not contagious. Those unhappily detained prisoners

there are lodged and fed gratuitously, and no labor is exacted from them.

Within less than a mile of this latter building is an hacienda, called Buena Vista; near it is a colossal tree of the mimosa class, which may be seen for more than a league at sea. To the east-north-east of the hacienda is an opening, similar to those above mentioned, that is supposed to lead to the subterraneous caverns. It is concealed from the eye of a careless observer, and is very little known. This, however, is very convenient for smugglers, who resort to it in the night to conceal contraband merchandise, and who are, perhaps, the only persons that make these places, in the bosom of the earth, materially serviceable.

The harbor at Campeachy is shallow, and a vessel which draws more than six feet is obliged to anchor a league from the shore. In spite of this disadvantage, from the superior excellence of the timber, and other causes, a number of vessels are built here, measuring a hundred feet in the keel, which are launched by the aid of ingenious contrivances invented for the purpose.

A theatre has been erected here under the architectural direction of M. Journot, before named. This is one of the most beautiful edifices of the place. The internal decorations, however, will not compare with the handsome exterior.

The climate of this part of the province appears to be healthy. The heat is extreme at noon; but the land breeze in the morning, and the sea breeze in the

evening, render the atmosphere, at those periods, most delightful. During the rainy season, which commences about the last of May, and ends in September, intermittent fevers are quite prevalent. These, however, by temperate and regular habits on the part of the inhabitants, and attention to the wearing of flannel, and such garments as are suited to the changes of the weather, and keeping from unnecessary exposure, may, in a great measure, be avoided.

In the neighborhood of Campeachy are many ruins which richly deserve the attention of travellers, but which the time to which my short excursion was limited, would not permit me the gratification of visiting to any extent. Upon a small river near Champoton, some leagues inland, where it enlarges to a very considerable lake, are situated many ruins of a kind of sculpture displaying the finest taste; but the edifices are so buried beneath the water and earth that surround them, that it would require great labor and perseverance to investigate them. Four leagues to the north of Campeachy there exist many tumuli, which cannot be visited during the rainy season without much risk and inconvenience. Three leagues farther north is a little peninsula, called Jaina. Here is situated a very large tumulus, around which have been found a number of small earthen figures, and some flint heads of lances, very finely formed. To the antiquarian and the curious this ruin presents many attractions.

From this tumulus, and other places contiguous to ruins of immense cities, in the vicinity of Campeachy,

were procured among the crumbling walls, some skeletons and bones that have evidently been interred for ages, also a collection of idols, fragments, flint spear-heads, and axes; besides sundry articles of pottery-ware, well wrought, glazed, and burnt.

These interesting relics are now in the possession of the author. The reader will observe the Engravings of the most important, and those that are in the most perfect state of preservation.

Plates No. I., II., and III., are correct designs of the Idols, which are supposed to have been the household gods of the people who inhabited these regions. They are hollow, and contain balls about the size of a pea, that are supposed to be formed of the ashes of the victims that have been sacrificed to the particular god in which they are deposited.

Plate No. IV. represents fragments composed of the same material as the Idols. Whether these were intended for the same, or ornaments to their vessels, I am unable to decide.

Plate No. V. represents the designs of the pots and vessels of the collection, which were probably used as burners in the performance of religious rites and ceremonies.

Plate No. VI. represents a Turtle, beautifully wrought in a fine hard earthy substance. This figure, by its frequent appearance throughout the ruins of Yucatan, was undoubtedly one of great importance, either from its religious or civil associations. This plate also represents an earthen pan, well wrought, (apparently turned in a lathe,) and glazed, which

was probably one of their household utensils; also a stone pounder, which was probably used in the same department.

The Idols, which are, so far as I am at present informed, the only ones from Yucatan ever before brought into this country, are unlike any that have been found in other parts of Mexico. I have compared them with those brought from the city of Mexico by Hon. Joel R. Poinsett, and now in the cabinet of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, and have been able to discover no analogy between them. This fact gives color for the presumption that the people prepared these *penates* according to their respective tastes, and with little reference to any standard or canon.

The bones and other relics of the persons who had been for a very long time dead, were now nearly decomposed. Being under the impression that these remains might assist in explaining the origin of the early inhabitants, or throw light upon other difficulties in the archæology of Yucatan, I determined to preserve and bring them with me. Immediately upon my arrival in Philadelphia I presented these remains to Dr. Morton, a gentleman who is so well known to the scientific world that it is unnecessary for me to say, that any opinion which he would be led to by their examination would deserve, and receive, the highest consideration from men of science throughout the world. A few days before the present chapter went to press, but too late to notice the fact in a more appropriate place, I had the honor of

8 ft. long 54 in. Wide.

ASIATIC

6½ in Long 3½ in Wide.

5¼ in Long. 4.¼ in Wide.

8½ in Long 3¼ in Wide.

7 in Long 4¼ in Wide.

6 in. Long 2¼ in. Wide.

5¾ in. Long 3¾ in. Wide.

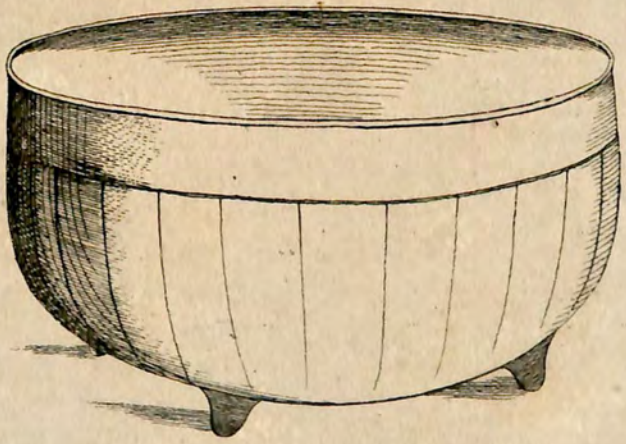
5 in. Long 2¼ Wide.

3¼ in. Long 2¾ in. Wide.

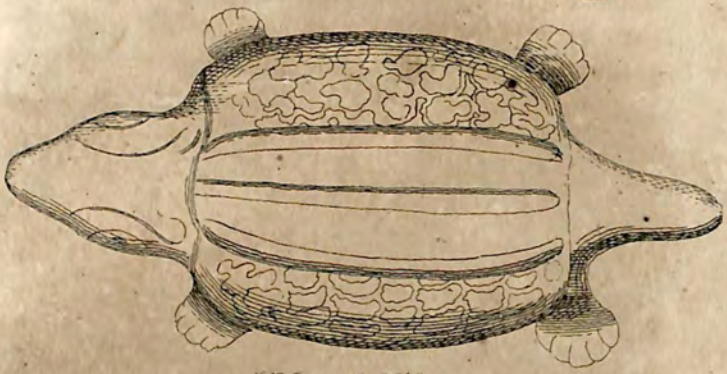
FRAGMENTS.

4¼ in. High 4 in. Diameter.

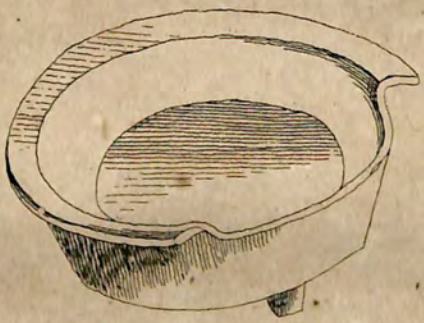
2¼ in. High 3 in. Diameter.



5¼ in. Diameter 3¼ in. High.



5 in. Long 3 Wide.



9 in. in diameter 3 in. in height

7 in. height 6 in. in diameter.

receiving a letter from Dr. Morton, in which he favors me with the result of his examination; an attention for which I am the more grateful, inasmuch as it was accompanied with a permission to make any use of the writer's remarks which, in my opinion, would be most acceptable to my readers. I have no hesitation in presenting to them all the contents of the above communication which are pertinent to the subject about which we are concerned:—

"Such is the extremely disintegrated state of some of these bones, and so little animal matter remains in their composition, that I should suppose them to belong to an ancient period in the history of our aboriginal nations; a conjecture which is sustained by the circumstances under which they were found. One of these skeletons is that of a man perhaps twenty-five years of age, with large bones and no trace of *epiphyses*. A few fragments of cranial bones are also large and massive; which remark is also applicable to both the upper and lower jaws and the teeth, which latter are singularly perfect. The os calcis, (heel bone,) and other parts of the foot, are of delicate proportions; thus presenting that contrast between the broad head and small hands and feet, which has long been observed as one of the characteristics of our native tribes. Parts of a second skeleton, from the same mound, have belonged to a smaller person; but they are so much broken as to preclude any certain indications of age or sex.

"Of the two remaining skeletons, only a few fragments of the long bones, and others of the hands and

feet, remain. They are much larger than those already mentioned, and have no doubt pertained to individuals above the ordinary stature.

"I am extremely indebted to you for the opportunity you have thus afforded me of examining and comparing these ancient relics of our native Indian race; for, dilapidated as they are, their characters, as far as I can ascertain them, correspond with all the osteological remains of that people which have hitherto come under my observation; and go to confirm the position, that all the American tribes (excepting the Esquimaux, who are obviously of Asiatic origin) are of the same unmixed race. I have examined the sculls (now in my possession) of four hundred individuals, belonging to tribes which have inhabited almost every region of North and South America, including the civilized as well as the savage communities, and I find the same type of organization to pervade and characterize them all.

"I much regret that we have in this country so few sculls of the Mongolian or Polar tribes of northern Asia. These are all-important in deciding the question whether the aboriginal American race is peculiar, and distinct from all others; a position which I have always maintained, and which I think will be verified when the requisite means of comparison are procured."

At Cape Catoche is an entire city buried beneath the luxurious vegetation, which has not yet attracted much attention from visiters. From this circumstance, probably, some singular results might be the

reward of those who have the enterprise to examine these ruins. Near the river Lagartos, and upon its banks, stand two lonely pyramids. Upon the eastern shore of the main land, opposite to the island of Cozumel, there appears a long line of ruined edifices, occupying an extent of ground nearly equal to that over which are spread the ruins of Uxmal.

At point Soliman are other ruins of great interest and little known. On the south side of Espiritu Santo Bay are also very extensive ruins. In following the route leading to Bacalar, one may discover towers, whose summits overtop the surrounding trees.

All the Cordilleras, from Tecax to Muna, is strewed with ruins of towns and isolated monuments. Who shall tell how many myriads of men were required to erect and to people such numerous and stupendous cities!

There are many poisonous reptiles and insects in Yucatan, whose bite is most deadly. The Indians, however, have a ready specific in the various plants which abound here, and which renders them entirely harmless.

There is a district of country situated between Guatemala, Yucatan, and Chiapas that has never yet been subdued. This section is surrounded by mountains, and is said to be inaccessible, except by one way, and that not generally known. No one yet, who has had the boldness to follow the inhabitants to their wild retreat, has ever returned to render an account of their journey. The inhabitants are represented as speaking the Maya and Tchole languages, and

many of them as conversing well in Spanish. From the latter circumstance, they are enabled to visit the nearest cities, sell their tobacco, the principal article they cultivate, and afterwards to return to their retreats. They are constituted of the Lacandrons and other savage tribes; are expert warriors, remarkably athletic, and very cruel. They are worshippers of idols, and their religious ceremonies are said to have undergone little or no change.

Palenque is in the neighborhood of this settlement; and Waldeck, who says he has conversed with some of these people, understood that they had white persons among them—but whether they stay voluntarily, or are detained as prisoners, he has not mentioned. The same nation is spoken of by Mr. Stephens. Their number is estimated at thirty thousand; their secluded mode of life makes it almost impossible to arrive at any thing like correct impressions respecting them. The Indians of Yucatan and the neighboring provinces have been seen in conversation with persons from this district; they, however, appear to know as little of the people of whom I speak as others. Could a friendly intercourse, by any possibility, be established with this surprising country, there is scarcely a doubt that a complete knowledge of the former inhabitants of the immense ruins scattered throughout the provinces would be revealed. That their temples and records remain in safety, and are capable of speaking to posterity, there can scarcely be a question.

I doubt if the above be a true estimate of their

numbers, since they have been enabled to sustain themselves for ages (no one knows how long) against enemies and intestine wars and dissolution. It would be more reasonable to suppose that they are the outcast Pelasgi of some invading nation, and the remnants of a power that once defended those wasted towns that now lie a huge mass of scattered ruins. The gathered fragments of Palenque, and other conquered places of equal importance, may have concentrated their broken strength within the boundaries of these hills, and, under the strong impulse of desperation, they may have preserved their nationality in defiance of all the force that surrounded them. It may well excite universal astonishment, when the fact becomes known, that there actually exists, within a territory of five hundred miles, a distinct people, that have governed themselves for ages, and that they continue to do so without assistance or protection. It would be a lesson to mankind to ascertain how they have managed their self-governing principles, and how they have preserved the national individuality. Three centuries have transpired since the conquest; and, if neither Yankee nor Irishman have found his way among these Lacandrones before this, it deserves the careful consideration both of the psychologist and the statesman.

I had the pleasure of meeting two padres in Campeachy; and, as this is my first offence of the kind, I hope to be forgiven for mentioning their names—the brothers Camacho. This I do solely with a view of promoting antiquarian research. These gentlemen

have devoted themselves to science and learning; and they are the only ones I encountered during my absence who were enthusiasts in regard to the interesting ruins of Yucatan. They have spent much labor in individual examinations; have sacrificed liberally for the benefit of travellers; and would, if they lived in a more enlightened country, be respected and honored. My visit to their house was an interesting one. They were alone with their cats!—Their apartments presented the appearance of a real curiosity-shop, or a necromancer's conjuring room, filled up, as they were, with every thing wonderful, and strange, and antique. They were extremely kind; and presented me many interesting antiquities of their country. I left them and their city with regret; they were among the very few whom during my absence I had met with pleasure and parted from with regret.

I must now close this rambling account of my journeying in Yucatan.

I embarked from Campeachy on the eleventh day of April at daylight, on board of a small American schooner bound for New Orleans, where I arrived on the twentieth, after an absence of four months, which I calendar among the most instructive months of my life.

Though my journal terminates here, I trust I shall be pardoned, by a portion of my readers at least, for soliciting their attention to some further particulars connected with the present political condition of Yucatan, and also to a brief criticism of the Maya language, to which allusion has already been made.

However imperfect these discussions may be, I trust they may not be found wholly without profit to the very large portion of my countrymen who, like myself, have never before had their attention distinctly called to the consideration of these subjects.

CHAPTER XIII.

Political History of Yucatan — The Rochelanos — A Civil Revolution — A Tumultuary Movement in the Interior — Santiago Iman — Attack on Espita — Retreat to San Fernando — Quiet Restored for a Time — Colonel Roquena — Attack on Tizimin — Return of the Troops — Attack on Valladolid — Capitulation — Succession of Events — A New Constitution — The New Congress — New Party — Opinions — Physical Incapacity for Independence — The Press of Yucatan.

It might be well enough for me to adopt the example of Fielding, so far as to precede this chapter with a stage direction of this kind: "To be skipped by those who are not fond of politics." The political history of Yucatan necessarily possesses but little interest to any class of foreign readers, and yet I could not but think that some notice of that kind might add symmetry to a work which relies so much for its value upon its record of institutions and customs, which are indebted for their shape and character to the political condition of the people to whom they belong. For that reason I present the substance of my own observations and inquiries, without pretending, however, that the following remarks will answer half of the questions pertaining to this subject, which a student of political science would be disposed to ask.

Yucatan, since its conquest by the Spaniards, and until the year 1839, was a province of the great Mexican Confederacy, and formed one of the United Provinces of Mexico. For several years, however, previous to 1839, the tranquillity of Mexico had been disturbed by a party called Rochelanos, who insisted upon the independence of Yucatan, or else a more liberal central government. Their agitations finally placed their party at the head of the government. In the year 1837 this party was overthrown and removed from power, having lost the elections by an overwhelming majority; indeed, so decided was the triumph of their opponents, that they dared not resist, and a civil revolution was effected, for the first time since the independence of the country. They immediately commenced agitating and plotting, but with no decided success until the year 1839.

With a view of overturning the then existing government, and ousting the incumbents of office from their places, the Rochelanos favored covertly a design on the part of those styling themselves Federalists, to regain the power they had lost in 1834. The 29th of May, 1839, witnessed a tumultuary movement in the village of Tizimin, a small town of the interior, where a militia captain, one Santiago Iman, at the head of a handful of deserters from the third battalion of local militia, counting on the co-operation of several leading personages, set up the standard of revolt, under the specious pretext of proclaiming the Federal constitution of 1824. A feigned attack was immediately made on the neighboring village of Es-

pita, a place of some importance, containing about three thousand inhabitants, and distant from Tizimin six leagues.

The military commander at Espita had engaged himself to act in concert, but at the critical moment he played false, and deceived the hopes of the leaders in the plot. He received an intimation from Iman to surrender, as had been previously agreed upon, but retained the messengers, and made preparations for defence. Iman marched to the attack in the night, and, much to his surprise, met with resistance. A very hot firing (as it was styled in the bulletins) was kept up for nearly four hours; but, strange to say, only one was killed, a negro, from the window of one of the houses behind which he had posted himself. Before daylight the firing ceased, and Iman returned unmolested to Tizimin. Those who had instigated him to take the step having failed in their engagements to him, his situation now became very critical, and he was left entirely to his own resources. A retreat to San Fernando was determined on and executed. This is a small village seven leagues from Tizimin, to the northward, inhabited by a colony of negroes from St. Domingo, numbering about seventy males. Here he remained, and threw up some fortifications, composed chiefly of stone barricades across the roads at the entrance of the village, and for the purpose of obstructing their advance, cut down the trees lining the roads by which the troops were to pass. Nearly two months elapsed before he was attacked—then by about four hundred men, chiefly

militia, under the orders of the commander of Espita, already named. As might have been anticipated from the character of this person, nothing of importance was effected; but after a great deal of noise and smoke, the defenders ran away, and the attacking party entered, without killing one or taking a single prisoner. This was afterwards trumpeted as a signal victory, and the "hero," as he was styled, greatly eulogized. The revolution was officially declared to be terminated; but notwithstanding, as no pursuit was ever made, a sufficiency of time was allowed to the insurgents to reunite their scattered numbers.

A long time was spent in inactivity on the part of the government troops, until at last, after some slight brushes, Tizimin was evacuated by its garrison, and again occupied by Iman, who, finding himself with no other resource, bethought himself of enlisting the sympathies of the Indians, by offering them a discharge for the future from the religious contributions paid by them. This leader, who was destitute himself of talent and instruction, and in every respect a very common man, could not foresee the influence this would have on the contest; but the most well informed men in the country knew its importance, and feared ultimately a re-enactment of the bloody scenes of St. Domingo. Numbers of Indians flocked to Tizimin, and contributed, with their persons and such small means as they possessed, to the maintenance of the struggle. Supplies of cattle, turkeys, fowls, corn, &c., were carried by them to the general,

as they styled Iman, and the means thus furnished him of sustaining himself. The government, at last aware of the real importance of quelling in time this movement, made every exertion, and a division of about six hundred men marched for Tizimin, under the command of Colonel Roquena. This officer, who is said to possess talent and bravery, but who exhibited neither on this occasion, attacked the place on the 12th of December, in solid column, marching directly to the point, without an effort to outflank, select a weak point, or cut off the retreat of the enemy. The whole column was held in check in a narrow road before a common stone barricade for nearly six hours. After losing about fifty men, one of the companies carried the place at the point of the bayonet, and the rest of the division then marched into the place. The defenders retreated, almost without loss or pursuit, just as at San Fernando, and a pompous description was given of the brilliant victory.

The troops were afterwards stationed at different points, and the colonel returned to Campeachy, believing nothing more remained to be done! The garrison of Tizimin was finally withdrawn, and the place re-occupied by the insurgents. Things remained in this state of indecision; the resources of the government were absorbed uselessly in the maintenance of troops and officers, who took no interest in the cause, until the 11th of February, 1840, an attack was made on the city of Valladolid, then garrisoned by three hundred men, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Arans. This brave officer determined

to discharge his duty, and knowing his subordinates to have been tampered with, marched in person at the head of some guerrilla parties, to attack the insurgents, who had obtained an entrance in the "barrio" of Sisal. He was killed, and some two or three others, by shots from the houses. Nothing was thought of after his fall but capitulating. That night the troops yielded up their arms to a motley looking band of Indians, led on by some of the outcasts of society, deserters, assassins, &c. A meeting was held at the town hall, and the *pronunciamiento* of Valladolid given to the world, seconding the plan of Iman, and re-announcing the Constitution of 1824. From the importance of the place, its example was followed by the surrounding villages and towns, and in the course of a week, Merida, the capital of the State, declared for the new order of things; several of the military taking a part in the proceedings. Nothing was left but Campeachy, the head-quarters of the Commanding General Rivas, with a garrison of about one thousand men. Marches and countermarches were effected, until the siege of the place, which finally capitulated in June, leaving the whole State in the hands of the so styled Federalists.

An effort had been made before the taking of Valladolid to vary the plan of the revolution, providing for the removal of the Commanding General Rivas, who was particularly obnoxious, and changing the *personale* of the administration; but Iman, who had been abandoned to his own resources, was then ob-

stinate and could not be managed. At Merida likewise, on the occasion of their *pronunciamiento*, the Rochelanos endeavored to usurp the direction of the movement, which had now become popular; for many of the most influential and talented men, perceiving the inability of the government to weather the storm, owing to the bad faith and cowardice of its supporters, had resolved upon taking an active part, and endeavoring to guide and direct the mind of the automaton Iman; who, possessing none of his own, was pleased and glad to make use of the judgment of others, as thus he was enabled to figure in high sounding proclamations, to which he could scarcely affix his signature. Several of the higher clergy or curates came forward in opposition to these revolutionary movements, actuated by various motives; one of which we would fain believe was a disinterested patriotism. They were well aware of the danger that menaced the white race in Yucatan, surrounded by an Indian population four times their number, should the revolution be any longer protracted. Another strong motive was the desire to save their incomes and benefices, directly attacked by the plan of Iman. This they succeeded in doing in part, as the males still pay the usual religious contribution; the females only being exempted by a decree of the Legislature of 1840. The attempt of the Rochelanos was a complete failure, and only served to sink them still lower in public opinion, and to justify the estimation in which they had always been held — of artful and designing intriguers.

The work of the revolution was now completed, as far as the original design went; namely, that of a change of *men*, for of *principles* but few were involved. The ball did not however stop here, as a number of political schemers, with a view of grafting themselves on, and identifying themselves with the revolution, brought forward a number of new projects, which in the first session of the legislature were carried out. The clergy and the military were directly attacked, deprived of their exclusive privileges, and many of the latter dismissed. A new constitution for the State was decreed on the thirty-first of March, 1841, not essentially different from its predecessors, except in the fact of its religious toleration. The governor of the State is restricted to certain limited powers in the constitution, but these restrictions in the end are nominal. From some pretext or other, he is almost always invested with extraordinary authority; enabling him to punish without trial, not only the guilty, but even such as he may choose to consider *suspicious*.

The Congress or Legislature was not elected for the purpose of forming a new constitution, *but it declared itself* to be invested with the necessary powers, and proceeded to exercise them. It also passed a tariff, greatly reducing the former scale of duties; although the Federal Constitution of 1824, proclaimed in the State, makes this entirely and exclusively to lie within the prerogatives of the general Congress under the new government. A thousand such infractions have been committed, without exciting remark or surprise. The tariff was altered and reduced, with

a view of discouraging smuggling, and thereby increasing the revenue. It had this effect for a short time; but the clandestine traffic is carried on as briskly as ever, and the country having been overstocked with goods, the amount of duties collected has greatly fallen off. The whole income of the State does not exceed at present seven hundred thousand dollars per annum.

For the past year and a half, a new party, if such it may be called, has attracted attention. The object in view is to continue the separation from the rest of the Mexican Republic. It is called the independent party, and is composed of a few young enthusiasts, and a number of older politicians, who, for the purpose of gratifying their own ends and interests, and from their connexion with some of the lawless men engaged in the late revolution, contrive to make it appear that there is a great deal of enthusiasm prevailing among the people; and that public opinion is decidedly in favor of the independence of the peninsula. To enter into arguments for the purpose of disproving this, is perfectly unnecessary. Such a thing as public opinion is unknown; the masses are too ignorant, and have been too long accustomed to dictation and pupilage, to have any opinion. This is demonstrated by the mere fact of every revolutionary movement having triumphed since their emancipation from the Spanish yoke; which clearly proves, that either there is nothing deserving the name of people, or else that they take no interest in public affairs; but allow themselves to be the playthings of every ambitious demagogue or military leader.

The country is not destined ever to be of any considerable importance in the political scale. Its resources are very limited; its capital small; its soil by no means fertile; it possesses neither good roads to any extent, nor a single navigable river; manufactures are almost unknown, and agriculture is in the most neglected state. How then can Yucatan sustain itself alone, or ever figure as an independent nation? The idea is absurd, and could only be entertained by an enthusiast, and one totally ignorant of the elements required to constitute national greatness and prosperity.

Another circumstance worthy of consideration is the existence of a large colored population, far outnumbering the whites. Should Yucatan be left to itself, an insurrection among the Indians would be productive of the most awful calamities; and in that case, being entirely isolated, no foreign aid could be looked for to subdue the danger. The glimpse the Indians have just caught of what they may do, and their exertions in the last revolution being rewarded by a diminution in the amount of their onerous religious contributions, may probably stimulate them to make an effort to free themselves from the bondage of the whites. Many intelligent and well-informed men, residents and natives of the country, fear this may ultimately be the result; and it is on this account chiefly they regret the employment of Indians in the late contest. The chord touched by Iman has vibrated, the way has been shown to designing and unprincipled men, of causing an excite-

ment and making themselves fearful; they have only to hold out promises, however fallacious, to this race, and ensure themselves a certain measure of importance and notoriety. Ere long some "Tecumseh" or "Black Hawk" may rise up, and the most disastrous, heart-rending, and bloody scenes will be re-enacted.

This is the distinguishing feature in the last revolution; it is certainly fraught with danger to the white race, yet in reward of his services the disinterested patriot, the new Washington, as he is styled by his sycophants, the leader and associate of deserters and assassins, Santiago Iman, is now created Brigadier General. The sphere is however too elevated for him to hope to maintain his position; and the slightest change will be sufficient to consign him to his native insignificance.

The state of affairs is now very critical: General Santa Ana, possessed, to say the least, of considerable energy, is at the head of affairs in Mexico: he menaces Yucatan with an invasion; and we know enough of the state of the country, and the feelings of its inhabitants, to say, that should he verify his intentions by sending an expedition, however small, he would meet with co-operation, and such aid as would enable him quickly and with certainty to subjugate the country.

In attempting to present a politico-historical sketch of the province of Yucatan, my duty would be but imperfectly discharged if I failed to notice its newspaper press, an engine which in all civilized countries at the present day has come to exercise

tremendous political influence. It is almost unnecessary for me to say that the direct action of the press upon public opinion here is quite inconsiderable, for there is but little public opinion to work upon, and but few papers competent to exercise any influence upon it.

There are only two or three small papers published at Merida. These are mostly filled with stories, local news, and markets, an incomplete marine list, and a collection of advertisements, that too plainly indicate the fallen condition of trade. At Campeachy there is a single small periodical, devoted to literature, and very poorly patronised. These represent the whole editorial strength of Yucatan. These papers never pretend to differ in opinion with the government upon any question of public policy. They do not aspire to control public opinion, except that opinion may be at variance with the wishes of the "powers that be." There is no freedom of discussion about the policy of the government or the religious establishments of the country, allowed or ever asked. What of interest these papers possess, therefore, arises from the stories which they occasionally publish, and the local news. It is obvious that the full force and efficacy of the newspaper have never been realized in any part of Mexico.

CHAPTER XIV.

Remarks on American Languages in general — Conflicting Opinions of Philologists — Religious Zeal a Stimulus that has produced the Grammars and Vocabularies of the American Languages — Sketch of the Grammar of the Maya Tongue — Concluding Observations respecting its Origin.

THE origin and the mutual relations of the American languages have long been favorite topics of discussion among philologists; but their researches and speculations have led to results so contradictory and utterly irreconcilable, that we are left, after a thorough perusal of the leading works upon the subject, in the same state of doubt and uncertainty with which we commenced it. Mr. Gallatin, in the prefatory letter to his learned and profound essay, entitled "A Synopsis of the Indian Tribes within the United States, East of the Rocky Mountains, and in the British and Russian Possessions in North America," remarks, that "amid the great diversity of American languages, considered only in reference to their vocabularies, the similarity of their structure and grammatical forms has been observed and pointed out by the American philologists. The substance of our knowledge in that respect will be found, in a condensed form, in the appendix. The result appears

to confirm the opinions already entertained on that subject by Mr. Du Ponceau, Mr. Pickering, and others; and to prove that all the languages, not only of our own Indians, but of the native inhabitants of America, from the Arctic Ocean to Cape Horn, have, as far as they have been investigated, a distinct character common to all, and apparently differing from those of the other continent with which we are the most familiar." Mr. Gallatin, however, in a note appended to this paragraph, qualifies it by stating that "the grammar of the language of Chili is the only one, foreign to the immediate object of the 'Synopsis,' with which a comparison has been introduced. Want of space did not permit him to extend the inquiry into the language of Mexico and other parts of Spanish America." Mr. Bradford, however, in his "Researches into the Origin and History of the Red Race," p. 309, states unqualifiedly that "philologists have examined into the form and character of the American languages, and have established satisfactorily that they have all sprung from one common source. The features of resemblance are such as enter into their elementary construction; the diversities, those to which all languages are exposed, by the separation and dispersion of those who speak them."

On the other hand, Baron Von Humboldt, in his "Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain," vol. i. p. 138, after some remarks upon the migrations of the American tribes, proceeds to state that "the great variety of languages still spoken in the kingdom of Mexico proves a great variety of

races and origin. The number of these languages exceeds twenty, of which fourteen have grammars and dictionaries tolerably complete. The following are their names: the Mexican or Aztec language; the Otomite; the Tarasc; the Zapotec; the Mistec; the Maya or Yucatan; the Totonac; the Popolouc; the Matlazing; the Huastec; the Mixed; the Caquiquel; the Taraumar; the Tepehuan; and the Cora. It appears that the most part of these languages, far from being dialects of the same, (as some authors have falsely advanced,) are at least as different from one another as the Greek and the German, or the French and the Polish. This is the case with at least seven languages of New Spain, of which I possess the vocabularies. The variety of idioms spoken by the people of the new continent, and which, without the least exaggeration, may be stated at some hundreds, offers a very striking phenomenon, particularly when we compare it with the few languages spoken in Asia and Europe."

We might give quotations from other writers, of an equally contradictory nature, were it our design to write a treatise upon the origin or the resemblances of the American languages in general. We intend, however, to confine our attention solely to the language of Yucatan, or the Maya tongue, mentioned above, by Humboldt, as one of the original languages of New Spain.

The Maya was the sole language spoken throughout the peninsula of Yucatan, and the northern portion of Guatemala, at the time of the first settlement

of the Spaniards in Campeachy. The difficulty of opening an intercourse with the Indians, and of mastering their language, was at first exceedingly great; but was finally surmounted by the learning and religious zeal of the Catholic priesthood, who, after years of incessant labor and self-denial, under the most discouraging circumstances, succeeded not only in acquiring a knowledge of the Maya tongue, sufficient to enable them to converse with and preach to the natives, but to invent a written language, and to compose a grammar and a vocabulary. It is impossible to reflect upon the physical and mental exertions of the Catholic missionaries among the Indians of America, without admiration. The Jesuits in Paraguay, Chili, Peru, and, in truth, throughout the whole of South America, animated by an unextinguishable zeal in the cause of religion, buried themselves in the most remote districts, in the midst of the most appalling dangers, and quietly and undauntedly set about the task of conquering the Indian, not with the sword, but with the pen; and they ceased not until they had obtained that key to his heart, in the shape of an embodied language, which all the political changes of the continent, during the lapse of centuries, have not been able to wrest from them. The Indian in Yucatan and Guatemala, as well as in South America, acknowledges no authority but that of the priest, and it is through the influence of the Church alone, that the temporal power is enabled to keep up even the semblance of government. The Padre is to the Indian a guide, father, and friend; he consults him on all

occasions. We hazard little in saying that throughout nine tenths of the peninsula of Yucatan, if we except the seaport towns, the entire control of the Indians is in the hands of the priesthood, and that the political relations now existing as between the government and the governed, would be instantly dissolved were the clergy to withhold their co-operation; and that the result would be the same, whatever mutations may take place among the parties which may now or hereafter contend for political supremacy

Humboldt speaks of fourteen languages of New Spain as having grammars and vocabularies tolerably complete. We will endeavor, by means of the Maya grammar and vocabulary in our possession, to give such a slight sketch of its structure, as we have been enabled to glean from its pages. The first Maya grammar was composed by Father Louis de Villalpando, the first Catholic priest that set foot upon the peninsula of Yucatan, at Campeachy. This grammar was never published, and was much improved by Father Landa, the first provincial minister, and the second bishop of Yucatan. His treatise, with the additions of the bishop, remained in manuscript, but was the basis of the grammars of Fathers Juan Coronel and Gabriel de San Bonaventura, which in their turn were largely used by the author of the work in our possession. It is a remarkable fact, tending to show the decline of literary taste among even the priesthood of Yucatan, that we were unable, after the most active research, to find any of the works

above mentioned, and we have reason to believe that few if any copies now exist. The grammar in our possession was written by Father Pedro Beltran, a Franciscan, and published at the city of Mexico, in 1746, see p. 69. The author, in his preface, characterizes the Maya, as "graceful in diction, elegant in its periods, and concise in style; often, in a few words of few syllables, expressing the meaning of many sentences. If the learner can overcome the obstacle presented by the difficulty of pronouncing some of the consonants, which are intensely guttural, he will find the language of easy acquisition." After some remarks upon the mode in which he proposes the trial of his subject, he concludes with the following remarks, which we have condensed here, to show that religious zeal was the moving cause which produced all the grammars and vocabularies of the Indian languages: "I will not rest my appeal in behalf of the Maya upon considerations of mere personal interest, or of the pleasure which must be the result of being able to communicate ideas in a foreign tongue; I would elevate my thoughts above such comparatively base and vulgar views; since I dedicate my work as an instrument for the service of the Divine Majesty, knowing, from my personal experience, that the brethren of the church will obtain abundant fruit among the poor Indians, by instructing them from the pulpit and the confessional, and likewise holding converse with them, in their native tongue: since by this means we shall most successfully thwart the Devil, who will be cast down if we

succeed, and who often interposes ridiculous difficulties in our path, which we can easily surmount; the Accursed One well knowing, that in turning aside, and not acquiring this language, we deeply offend God, in that we cause the ruin of many souls. Therefore, beloved reader, apply yourself carefully to this treatise, to the end that you may please God, by opening the ears of this poor people, and feeding them with spiritual bread."

The Maya alphabet consists of only twenty-two letters, of which the following, viz.,

ɔ, ch, k, pp, th, tz,

are peculiar to the language, and are very difficult of pronunciation. Mechanical rules, representing their sounds, are given in the grammar, but it is almost impossible to acquire them without the assistance of a native. It is deficient in the following letters:—

d, f, g, j, q, r, s.

The remaining letters are sounded as in Spanish.

The parts of speech are the same as in English. The noun is indeclinable, that is, the cases are formed solely by means of prepositions; the accusative, like the objective in English, requiring no preposition when governed by an active verb. The genders are natural, as in English, and are designated by the particle *Ah* for the masculine, and *Ix* for the feminine, neuter nouns having no prefix; thus—

Ah cambezah, . . . master.
Ix cambezah, ... mistress.

These monosyllables, however, are generally written simply H and X. They are often used in a pro-

nominal sense when mention is made of any peculiarity or attribute of a living person; thus, *nohoch* being an adjective, signifying *great*, and *pol* a noun, meaning *head*, we should say—

H nohoch pol, . . . He with the large head.
X nohoch pol, . . . She with the large head.

The genders of beasts and birds are still further designated by the prefix *xibil* for the male, and *chupul* for the female.

The numbers are expressed by affixing to the substantive the particle *ob*, to signify the third person plural, and the personal pronouns to express the first and second persons. The adjective is, like the substantive, indeclinable; admitting only, as in English, of the variation of degrees of comparison. These are formed by doubling the last syllable, and prefixing a pronoun for the comparative; as—

tibil,	good.	*û tibilil*,	his,	her;	or its better.
noh,	great.	*û nohol*,	"	"	" greater.
kaz,	ugly.	*ú kazal*,	"	"	" more ugly.
lob,	bad.	*û lobol*,	"	"	" worse.

The prefix of *u* is changed to *y*, and sounded with the adjective, when it begins with a vowel. The final syllable of all comparatives has been gradually corrupted into *il* or *el*, in the spoken language.

The relation of comparison between two persons or things is expressed by several words analogous to *than*, in English; but this part of the subject belongs more properly to the syntax.

The superlative degree is formed by simply prefixing to the adjective the word *hach*, *very*; as—

lob,	bad.	*hach lob*,	very bad, or worst.
ez,	enchanted.	*hach ez*,	most enchanted.

The pronouns are very difficult to classify. The author, however, arranges them in five divisions, of which two are demonstrative, two mixed, or partaking of the possessive nature, and one reciprocal or reflective.

The first, which is prefixed solely to active or transitive verbs, or used as a relative, is declined as follows:—

Ten,	I;	*Toon*,	We;
Tech,	Thou;	*Teex*,	Ye;
Lay,	He.	*Loob*,	They.

The second is suffixed to all tenses of neuter or substantive verbs, except the present and imperfect. It also serves as an objective when following an active verb, and, joined with a past participle, forms a neuter verb. It is thus declined:—

En,	I;	*On*,	We;
Ech,	Thou;	*Ex*,	Ye;
Laylo,	He.	*Ob*,	They.

The two demonstrative and possessive pronouns are as follows:—

In, I,	or mine;	*Ca*, We,	or ours;
A, Thou,	" thine;	*A ex*, Ye,	" yours;
U, He,	" his.	*V ob*, They,	" theirs.
U, I,	or mine;	*Ca*, We,	or ours;
An, Thou,	" thine;	*A uex*, Ye,	" yours;
Y, He,	" his.	*Y ob*, They	" theirs.

The numerous and delicate distinctions between these last, as shown by the author in many examples, would be fatiguing to the reader were they set forth at length. It is enough to remark here, that the first is used in the conjugation of certain tenses

of the verbs, and the second in certain others; and that, as a possessive, the first is used before nouns beginning with a consonant, and the second before those commencing with a vowel.

The reciprocal or reflective pronoun is declined as follows:—

Inba,	Myself;	*Caba,*	Ourselves;
A ba,	Thyself;	*A ba ex,*	Yourselves;
U ba,	Himself.	*U ba ob,*	Themselves.

This is used precisely as in English: thus, *cimzah,* to kill; *cimzahba,* to kill one's *self.*

The verbs are divided into four conjugations; of which the first comprehends all absolute or neuter verbs. The verbs of the other conjugations are all active or transitive, but are rendered passive by being conjugated after the first conjugation; whence all passive verbs may be said likewise to be embraced under this form. All verbs of this conjugation, with a few exceptions, terminate, in the *infinitive,* in the letter *l,* and are of more than one syllable. The perfect tense ends always in *i,* and the future in *c.* We give a few examples, to show the symmetry of the arrangement of the Spanish grammarian.

Etppizanhal,	*etppizanhi,*	*etppitzanhac,*	to resemble;
Elel,	*eli,*	*elec,*	to burn;
Hatzpahal,	*hatzpahi,*	*hatzpahac,*	to separate;
Mankinhal,	*mankinhi,*	*mankinhac,*	to persevere;
Uenel,	*ueni,*	*uenec,*	to sleep;
Xanhal,	*xanhi,*	*xanac,*	to delay

The second conjugation, which is the first of the active verbs, is indicated by the termination, *ah.* The perfect likewise ends in *ah,* being distinguished

from the present by a different pronoun, and the future in *z*. A few examples follow: —

Cambezah,	*cambezah,*	*cambez,*	to teach;
Yukkahzah,	"	*yukkahez,*	to examine;
Kochbèzah,	"	*kochbez,*	to blame;
Xupźah,	"	*xupez,*	to destroy;
Zipzah,	"	*zipez,*	to provoke.

The verbs of the third conjugation are all monosyllabic, and form the preterite by the addition of *ah*, and the future in *é* or *ab* indiscriminately; as, for example: —

Kam,	*kamah,*	*kamé* or *kamab,*	to receive;
Mac,	*macah,*	*macé* or *macab,*	to shut;
Ux,	*uxah,*	*uxé* or *uxab,*	to gather;
Xoc,	*xocah,*	*xocé* or *xocab,*	to respect.

The verbs of the fourth conjugation differ from those of the third, in being polysyllabic. They form the preterite by adding *tah*, and the future by adding *té* to the body of the verb. If the infinitive end in *tah*, the preterite remains the same. Some examples follow: —

Kabatah,	*kabatah,*	*kabaté,*	to number;
Kuul,	*kuultah,*	*kuulté,*	to worship;
Lolobthan,	*lolobthantah,*	*lolobthanté,*	to curse;
Nenol,	*nenoltah,*	*nenolté,*	to contemplate;
Tzolthan,	*tzolthantah,*	*tzolthanté,*	to interpret;
Zinché,	*zinchétah,*	*zinchété,*	to crucify.

The irregular verbs, of which there are about as many as in our own language, are to be learned only from practice. The auxiliary verbs likewise require much attention, to enable the student to conjugate the regular verbs. They are used in the different tenses

and modes precisely as the auxiliaries in the modern European languages, except that they sometimes follow the participles in place of preceding them. We give the reader a specimen of the mode of conjugating a verb of the second conjugation in the present and imperfect tenses, our limits not allowing us to give all its modifications.

Cambezah, cambezah, cambez, To teach.

PRESENT INDICATIVE.

Ten cambezic,	I teach;
Tech cambezic,	Thou teachest;
Lay cambezic,	He teaches.
Toon cambezic,	We teach;
Teex cambezic,	Ye teach;
Loob cambezic,	They teach.

IMPERFECT INDICATIVE.

Ten cambezic cuchi,	I was teaching;
Tech cambezic cuchi,	Thou wast teaching;
Lay cambezic cuchi,	He was teaching.
Toon cambezic cuchi,	We were teaching;
Teex cambezic cuchi,	Ye were teaching;
Loob cambezic cuchi,	They were teaching.

Were we to give the remaining portions of this verb, as conjugated by Father Beltran, the reader would be filled with admiration at the clearness and simplicity of his arrangement, and perceive how much his labors have facilitated the acquisition of this language.

The great obstacle, however, to the perfect knowledge of the Maya, and which can only be removed by continual converse with the natives themselves, is the frequent use of elisions and syncopes. The author has devoted several pages to this part of his

subject, and has laid down many rules to guide the learner; but finally he is obliged to confess that no written directions can be given to embrace every case. The Maya tongue, in this respect, resembles many other Indian languages, in which words are elided, syncopated, and consolidated together, until the grammatical construction can only be conjectured by the philologist, and the radices become jumbled up and difficult to distinguish. The utmost that the grammarian can accomplish, is to separate the different parts of speech, and to classify them scientifically. A spoken language is always more or less elided in conversation, however distinctly the words may be written in books; but the written languages of South America present consolidated masses of words truly formidable to behold, and which tend utterly to discourage the most patient philologist. Humboldt mentions the word NOTLAZOMAHUIZTESPIXCALATZIN, signifying "venerable priest, whom I cherish as my father," as used by the Mexicans when speaking to the curates; and the vocabularies of Indian languages, both of North and South America, exhibit words of even greater longitude. It is evident that so long as the words of a language are, as it were, fused together, almost according to the fancy of the speaker, grammatical rules will be of little practical use to guide the scholar, and that he must acquire the language mostly by the ear. This perhaps accounts for the disappearance of all grammars and vocabularies of the Maya tongue from the peninsula of Yucatan, the priests finding it much easier to learn

the language directly from the Indian, than to acquire it from books. I offer this, however, as a suggestion, rather than as an explanation.

The brief sketch we have given of some of the features of the Maya tongue, naturally leads to speculations concerning its origin, and that of the nation by which it is spoken.

There appears to be but little resemblance between the Maya, and the Mexican or Aztec, although they are both intensely guttural, and have a great similarity when viewed superficially by a cursory observer. The Maya bears evident marks of very great antiquity, and may have been the language of Mexico before the great invasions of the Toltecs and Aztecs. There are some who suppose that the present inhabitants of Yucatan are but the scattered remnants of a great nation, which once ruled a large portion of the continent, and had its central seat of power in the peninsula; and that it was gradually forced to yield to the assaults of more warlike nations, who invaded it from the North, and retired within the boundaries of the peninsula, where it decayed by degrees, until all vestige of political power was lost, long before the arrival of the Spaniards. Its temples and pyramids, and its spoken tongue, are the only memorials from which we can form any idea respecting its origin. This question necessarily involves a solution of the great problem of the origin of the American race in general.

The opinions of writers upon this subject are diverse, and are supported on each side with a great

variety of interesting facts and inferences. It has long been a favorite idea with most who have treated of this topic, that America originally derived its population from Europe or Asia, or, to speak in the usual manner, that the *New* World was peopled from the *Old*. This hypothesis seems to have been assumed in the first instance as a premise; at least, most arguments upon this head seem to indicate that it has served as a sort of basis to the train of deductions; and the most ingenious suppositions and skilfully arranged facts have been adduced to support a foregone conclusion. Whether the American continent was peopled at a very remote or a comparatively recent date, is not of so much moment, although there is a great diversity of opinion also in this respect. Mr. Gallatin, in his "Prefatory Letter," above mentioned, is of opinion that "this continent received its first inhabitants at a very remote epoch, probably not much posterior to the dispersion of mankind;" thus evidently referring to and supporting the theory of immigration, and of the derivation of all diversities of the human race from one type; while Mr. Bradford, in the final chapter of his elaborate work, before cited, agrees with Mr. Gallatin in the hypothesis that "the Red Race penetrated at a very ancient period into America," but differs with him in the conclusion that it "appears to be *a primitive branch of the human family*." Baron Von Humboldt, however, in his great work upon New Spain, terms the Indians "indigenous," and, although he quotes the opinions of many authors in favor of their Asiatic origin, he at

the same time combats their views with sundry striking facts, and finally modestly dismisses the subject with the remark, that "the general question of the first origin of the inhabitants of a continent is beyond the limits prescribed to history, and is not, perhaps, even a philosophical question."

We will candidly confess that we could never understand why philosophers have been so predisposed to advocate the theory which peoples America from the Eastern hemisphere. We think the supposition that the Red Man is a primitive type of a family of the human race, originally planted in the Western continent, presents the most natural solution of the problem; and that the researches of physiologists, antiquaries, philologists, and philosophers in general, tend irresistibly to this conclusion. The hypothesis of immigration, however inviting it appear at first to the superficial observer, and however much he may be struck with certain fancied analogies between the architectural or astronomical peculiarities of the American and the Asiatic, is, when followed out, embarrassed with great difficulties, and leads to a course of interminable and unsatisfying speculations.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

A BRIEF MAYA VOCABULARY.

Acquaintance, kaholâl.
Adder, can, or cam.
———, (harmless,) tzelcam.
Afternoon, zezikin.
Age (an,) khinkatun.
Agony, takyekik, xulikal.
Air, l'k-ikal.
Alligator, ain, chinan.
Alms, oayatzil, zitl, matan.
Anger, campectzil.
Animal, balachi.
Ant, zinic, zacal.
Apartment, uay, kakal.
Appetite, ulolal.
Arm and hand, kab.
Ascend, nacal.
Ashes, oitaun.
Asthma, coc, coczen, cencoc.
Avarice, coczioïl.
Ax, baat.

Badger, ah, chab.
Ball, (dance,) okot.
Banner, lacân.
Basket, xac.
Bat, zoo.
Bath, katchu.
Beam, chalatché.
Beans, bouloul.
Beautiful man, chichcelem.
Bee, yikilkab.
Bed, uay, chac, chacché
Bed canopy, yuub.
Bed-bug, kulimpic.
Bell, (small,) kilzimoc.
Bench, xacamache.
Bird, chich.
Birth, züan.
To Bleed, tock.
Bleeding, tockil.
Blood, kik, olâm.
Blemish, yikub.
Blind, ekmaï.
Blister, ppool, choolax.
Body, uinclil, cucut.
Bow, pump.
Boy, pal.
Brain, oomel.
Bread, uah.
To Break, noppah.
Breast, tzem.
Broom, mizib.
Bug, (flying,) pic.
Butter, tratz.
Buttock, ppucit.

Calabash, chu.
Caldron, mazcabcun.
Calf of the leg, ppuloc.
Cancer, ounuz, ounuztacon.

Candle, yibac.
Candle, (wax,) yibaccib.
Cane, ochux.
Cat, mix, miztun.
Caterpillar, nok, nokol.
Chair, yec.
Chamber, unoyna.
Chastisement, tzeac.
Cheek, ppuc.
Chicken, cach
Chin, meex.
Cholic, kuxnakil, yanakil.
Circle, peet, petil.
Claws, (beast's,) mol.
Cloak, (sort of,) zuyem.
Cloudy, nocoycan.
Coal, thabaantchuc, tchuc, cimenchuc.
Cochineal, mukaï.
Cold weather, ceec.
Cold in the head, zizhalil.
Cold, (any thing,) ziz.
Consumption, tzemztemil, nichoïl.
Contagion, bambanicimil.
Cook, or cookery, coben.
Corn, yxim.
Corner, tunk.
Cord, (line,) kaan.
Costiveness, natzhalil, zunonalil.
Courage, ikal, oabaïl.
Court, tancabal.
Covetousness, natzil.
Crab, ixbau.
Cramp, lotheek, zizoc.
Cricket, maaz.
Cripple, mech, moch.
Crown, nac.
Cruelty, yxmaonoilil.

Dauphin, ahzibic.
Day, kin.
Day-break, yaja-cab.
Day after to-morrow, cabej.
Dead, cimen.
Deaf, cooc.
Deafness, coocil.
Death, cimil, cimen.
Deceit, tabzah.
Deer, ceb.
To Deflower, zat zubuyil.
Descend, emel.
Desire, oibolal.
Diamond, kabliztoc.
To Die, cimil.
Dinner, (to eat,) hanal.
Discord, kexolal.
Dog, pek.
Door, hol.
Doubt, picolal.
Drake, (wild,) catzhâa.
Drawers, ex, humpel, sacech.
Drink, ukil.
Drop, chibalqc, can-nohol.
Dropsy, zot, chupil.
Dumb, tot.
Dumbness, totil.

Eagle, coot.
Ear, leexicên.
Early, matukin.
East, lakin.
Earthen dish, xamah.
Earthquake, cicilan, cicilancal.

Eat, (bread,) hantachouaj.
Egg, hue, cel.
Elbow, cué.
Embroider, chuy.
Enchanter, ahez, ahcunyha, ah-cunal.
Ennui, tukolal.
Enter, ocol.
Entrails, hobnel, tzuc.
Eye-lash, matzab.
Eye-lid, pachich.
Eyes, ouich, or ych.

Fair, kinic.
To Fall, nenel.
Family, balnaïl, cuchteil.
Fan, ual, picit.
Far, naach.
Fast, tunut, hana.
Fat, yek, yekil.
Father, hachyum.
Fear, zablèmotal.
Feather, kukum.
Feebleness, tzemil.
Female, chupal.
Fever, chacauil, chocuil.
Fever, (intermittent,) yaxcal.
Fiction, iktili, iktilican.
Fields, hotoch.
Fight, tock.
Fingers, jalkab.
Finger, (middle,) chumuckab.
———, (ring,) ahoïpit.
Fire, kak.
Firewood, zi.
Fish, (lake,) hulum.
———, (peculiar to America,) tzan.
To Fish, tchoukaï.
Flame of fire, leoka.
Flatulency, baalanik.
Flea, chic.
Flint, tock.
Flux, xaankik.
Foot and leg, oc.
Fore-finger, tuchub.
Foreigner, nachiluinic, oul.
Forest, kax.
Forehead, chi-lec.
Forgetfulness, tumbobal.
Fornication, pakkeban.
Foundation, oec, oecil.
Fraud, tabzah.
Fresh, (a thing,) ziz.
Froth, (scum,) om.

Gall, ka, kha, kah.
Giant, ahuanchac.
Girl, tchoupal.
Glow-worm, cocaï.
Goat, chupul, yuc.
God, Kù.
Godfather, yumilan, yeyum.
Godmother, naylan, nayluh.
Gold, kantakin.
Gossip, etyum, yumlàh.
Gravel, kaluix, kataczah, kazab.
Great, nohoch, mapal, nuc.
Grief, okomolal.
Groin, heh, mah.
Gum, chunco.
Gutter, ocoyhaa, oc.
——, (sewer,) beelhaa, yachhaa.
Hale, bat.

Half, tancoh.
Hammock, yaabkaan.
Hamper, baas.
Hands, kab.
Hand-worm, pech.
Hare, (two species,) halu, tzub.
Hat, pooc.
Hatred, uyah.
Head, hoot, pol.
Headache, kuxpolil, yapolil.
Hedge-hog, kixpachok.
Heart, puzcical.
To Heat, kilcab.
Heaven, caan.
Heel, toucuy, chol.
Hen, chcach.
Hermaphrodite, hazakam, cobol.
Hern, bac-haa-zacboc.
Hiccough, toucub.
Hip, bobox.
Honey, cab.
Honey bear, zambhol.
Hope, alabolal.
Horse, tzot, tzotzel.
Host, ula.
Hot, chocouhàa.
House, na, otoch.
——, (stone,) nocac.
Humanity, uinicil.
Hump-backed, ppuz, buz.
Hunger, uüh.
To Hunt, tzonaï.
Husband, ichambil.

Image, vimba.
Imagination, oüolàl.
Incest, onelbilkeban.
Inconstancy, hebolal,
Industry, ytzatil.
Infant, hcho, schuchul.
Infirmity, kohanil, chapaïl.
Intention, olil.
Intestine, zal.
Itch, uech.

Jar, (large,) calamacat.
Jaws, camach.
Jewel, oipit, kab.
Jug, buleb, zuleb.

Kidneys, yz.
To Kill, cimzah.
To Kiss, machü, ouo.
Knee, pix.

Ladder-step, oac, oacal.
Languor, kohanil, chapaïl.
Lead, tau.
League, luub.
To Learn, cambal.
Learning, miatzil.
Left, oic.
Level ground, poctchê.
Lie, tuz.
Light, zaz, zazil, zalilil.
Lightning, lemba, lembaïl,
License, zipitolal.
Lime, taan.
Linen, nok.
——, (dirty,) cicinok.
——, (clean,) yamaxihutnok.
Lion, (wild,) kàncoh.
——, (white,) oacek.
——, and Leopard, coh, chac-bo, aï.

Liver, tamnel.
Living, ahcuxan.
Lizard, ixmemech, xzeluoh.
——, (kind of,) huh.
Louse, uc.
Love, yecunah.

Madam, colel.
Madness, cooïl.
Man, uinic.
Man, (handsome,) chichcclem.
Market, kinic.
Marrow, oubac.
Mask, kohob.
Mat, (rush,) poop.
Mature, takin.
Measles, uzankak.
Meat, baak.
Melancholy, ppoolcmolal, tzemolal.
Memory, kehlaï.
Menses, ilmah-u.
Midnight, tantchoumoukacab.
Midwife, etnaa, nalha.
Milk, ucabim.
Mirror, nen.
Mist, yeeb.
Mole, ba.
Monkey, maax.
Month, ilaxnoc.
Moon, umpekin.
Moth, xthuyul.
Mother, hachnàa.
Mould, oalâb.
Mouth, cha, xi.
Murmur, campectzil.

Nail, (claw,) laxquetlac.
Near, nasaan.
Necklace, kanthixal.
Negligence, nayolal.
Negro, ekbok.
Nerve, xich.
Night, acâb, acbil.
Nipple, polim.
No, ma.
Nobody, mámac.
Noise, hum.
Noon, tantchoumoukin.
North, nohol.
Nose, nü.
Nostrils, hohuil.
Nothing, mabal.

Obstinacy, nolmaïl.
Oil, tzatza, kaabil.
Ornament, cen, cenanil tap.
Outcry, auac.
Owl, icim.

Pain, ya, yoïl, kinàm.
——, (in the side,) auat-mô.
——, (mouth, teeth,) chacnik.
——, (breast,) tuzik.
Palace, ahauna, papilote.
Palate, mabcaan.
Palm of the hand, tancab.
Palm-tree, haaz.
Pantaloons, humpel ech.
Partridge, num.
Paste, takab, takeb.
Pavement, taztunichil.
Peg, ecbe.
Pearl, yaxiltun.

Pen, cheb.
Period of time, katum, kin-katun.
Petticoat, paytem, bon.
Physician, ahouyah.
Pigeon, zacpacal.
Piles, kabak, ixmumuz.
Pillow, kumchuy.
Pitcher, ppul.
Plate, chob.
Poet, hiktan.
Poison, uay, yaah, tenoac.
Porridge-pot, cucul, yaan.
Pride, nonohbaïl.
To Produce, alan, alan cal.
Promise, zebchiil.
Provisions, nech.
Pulse, tipontip.
Pupil, (of the eye,) nenel, ich.
To Purge, kalab, halaboac.
Putrefaction, tuil, hio.

Quinsy, zippcal, yacalil.

Rabbit, thul, muy.
Rain, chuluhhàa.
Rainbow, cheel.
Remedy, oaoacil.
To Retake, mol.
Rib, chalat.
Right, noh.
Ring, oipit, kab.
Rivulet, haltun.
Rust, yx, akzah.

Saliva, tub, baba, cilbaïl.
Salt, taab.
Salutation, peul, peultah.
Scorpion, zinan.
Scull, tzec, tzekil.
Sea, kanaps.
Serpent, kanal, can, ixkukilcan.
To Sew, embroider, chuy.
Shade, booy.
Shark, ahcanxok.
Shin-bone, tul, tzelec.
Shirt, xicul.
To Shirt, buuc.
Shoes, chanal.
Shoulder, celembal, pach
Side, tzel.
To Sing, kaay.
Sir, yum.
Skeleton, tzitzak.
Skin, (human,) oth, othel.
——, (animal,) keuel.
To sleep, uenel.
Sleep, uenel.
Sleeve, teppliz, tzotiz.
Small-pox, kake.
Snails, mexenhubo.
Soil, bitun.
Sorcerer, ahez, ahcunyha, ahcunal
Sore, pomaetel.
Sore eyes, ya ichil.
Soul, pixan.
South, chanian.
Sparrow-hawk, hii.
Spider, leum.
Spine, chacpich.
——, (animal,) zibnel.
Spot, yihul.
Squirrel, cuc, cuceb.
Star, eck.

Steps, eb.
——, (stone,) ebtun.
——, (wood,) ebché.
Stomach, ychpuzical.
Stone, tunieh.
Stool, (cricket,) yculxec.
Stove, mohob, mob.
Stranger, omon.
Stud, moo.
To Suck, ɔuuc.
Sugar, momcab, mom.
Sun, khin.
Swallow, cuzân.
To Sweep, miz.
Sweat, keluc.
Sweet, chahuc, chaku.
Swim, tahal, tahalhaa.
To Swoon, nuniltameaz, haɔik.
Swooning, zalalol, zaccimil, thoyol.
Sword, (sabre,) haɔab.

Table, mayac.
——, (of stone,) mayac tun.
To Take, chaa.
Tarantula, am.
Tear, kabich, yatilich.
Teeth, (grinders,) cham.
Tempest, chacakal.
Temple, machunhach.
Thigh, chacbacal.
Thirst, ukah, ukhil.
Thorn, hiix.
Throat, cal.
Throne, nac ɔam.
Thumb, naakab.
Thunder, humchac, peechac.
Thunderbolt, uhaɔchac.
Thus, or so, beï.
Tiger, balam, chacekel.
Timidity, oyomolal.
Toad, much.
Tobacco, kutz.
To-day, béjélaé, or bechlaé.
To-morrow, saamal.
Tooth, co.
——, (canine,) ɔay.
Tortilla, (corn bread,) pakach, pecuah.
Tortoise, ack.
To Touch, tal.
Treason, kubilah.
Treasure, tzoy.
Tree, (trunk of,) out-choun-tchai.
Tripe, choch.
Trough, poxché, pokoatché.
Turtle, ae.

Understanding, naat.

Vanity, pezbaïl.
Vein, ychac.
Vengeance, tohbaïl.
Venom, soliman, chihimtie.
Vial, ppool, choolax.
Village, cacab.
Vinegar, zuɔci, pahcii.
Viper, ahaucan.
Virgin, zuluy.
Voice, than.
Vow, ppaachii.
Vulture, (species of,) ouxcil.

To Wake, ximbal.

To Walk, ximbalni.
Wall, pak.
——, (enclosure,) tulum, paa.
Wallet, mucuc, chim.
War, katun, bateil, ppizba.
Wart, ax, chùc.
Washerwoman, humpel, schpo, xpo.
Washing hands, pocolkab.
Water, haa.
Wax, cib.
Weasel, zabin.
To Weep, okol.
Well, cheen.
West, chikin.
Wheel, cocoo.
To Whistle, chouchoub.
Wild-boar, ac.
Wild-cat, akxux, zacoboly.
Wild-hog, citân.
Wild-turkey, ahau, cutz.
Will, olña.
Wind, (blustering,) ciz.
Wing, xik.
Wolf, cabcoh
Woman, or wife, attambil.
Wood-louse, (Indian,) xkuluck
To Work, meyach.
World, joookab.
Wound, cimil, centanil.
Wrist, kalcab.

Year, oumpe-hab.
Yes, matan la.
Yesterday, joolgé, or hooljé.
Youth, paal, baac.

NUMBERS TO ONE HUNDRED.

1, hun.
2, ca
3, ox
4, can.
5, ho.
6, uac.
7, uuc.
8, uaxac.
9, bolon.
10, lahun.
11, buluc.
12, lahca.
13, oxahun.
14, canlahun.
15, holhun.
16, uaclahun.
17, uuclahun.
18, uaxaclahun.
19, bolonlahun.
20, hunkal.
21, huntukal.
22, catukal.
23, oxtukal.
24, cantukal.
25, hotukal.
26, uactukal.
27, uuctukal.
28, uaxactukal.
29, bolontukal.
30, lahucakal.

31, buluctukal.
32, cahcatukal.
33, oxlahutukal.
34, canlahutukal.
35, holucukal.
36, uaclahutukal.
37, uuclahutukal.
38, uaxaclahutukal.
39, bolonlahutukal.
40, cakal.
41, huntuyoxkal.
42, catuyoxkal.
43, oxtuyoxkal.
44, cantuyoxkal.
45, hotuyoxkal.
46, uactuyoxkal.
47, uuctuyoxkal.
48, uaxactuyoxkal.
49, bolontuyoxkal.
50, lahuyoxkal.
51, buluctuyoxkal.
52, lahcatuyoxkal.
53, oxlahutuyoxkal.
54, canlahutuyoxkal.
55, holhuyoxkal.
56, uaclahutuyoxkal.
57, uuclahutuyoxkal.
58, uaxaclahutuyoxkal.
59, bolonlahutuyoxkal.
60, oxkal.
61, huntucankal.
62, catucankal.
63, oxtucankal.
64, cantucankal.
65, hotucankal.
66, uactucankal.
67, uuctucankal.
68, uaxactucankal.
69, bolontucankal.
70, lahucankal.
71, buluctucankal.
72, lahcatucankal.
73, oxlahutucankal.
74, canlahutucankal.
75, holhucankal.
76, uaclahutucankal.
77, uuclahutucankal.
78, uaxaclahutucankal.
79, bolonlahutucankal.
80, cankal.
81, hutuyokal.
82, catuyokal.
83, oxtuyokal.
84, cantuyokal.
85, hotuyokal.
86, uactuyokal.
87, uuctuyokal.
88, uaxactuyokal.
89, bolontuyokal.
90, lahuyokal.
91, buluctuyokal.
92, lahcatuyokal.
93, oxlahutuyokal.
94, canlahutuyokal
95, holhuyokal.
96, uaclahutuyokal.
97, uuclahutuyokal.
98, uaxaclahutuyokal.
99, bolonlahutuyokal.
100, hokal.

TRADITION OF THE MEXICAN NATIVES RESPECTING THEIR MIGRATION FROM THE NORTH.

In corroboration of Mr Atwater's opinion with respect to the gradual remove of the ancient people of the West toward Mexico, we subjoin what we have gathered from the Researches of Baron Humboldt on that point. See Helen Maria Williams' translation of Humboldt's Researches in America, vol. ii. p. 67 ; from which it appears the people inhabiting the vale of Mexico, at the time the Spaniards overran that country, were called Aztecs, or Aztecas ; and, were, as the Spanish history informs us, usurpers, having come from the north, from a country which they called *Aztalan*.

This country of Aztalan, Baron Humboldt says, "we must look for at least north of the forty-second degree of latitude." He comes to this conclusion from an examination of the Mexican or Azteca manuscripts, which were made of a certain kind of leaves, and of skins prepared ; on which an account in painted hieroglyphics, or pictures, was given of their migration from Aztalan to Mexico, and how long they halted at certain places ; which, in the aggregate, amounts to "four hundred and sixteen years."

The following names of places appear on their account of their journeyings, at which places they made more or less delay, and built towns, forts, tumuli, &c. :—

1st. A place of *Humiliation* and a place of *Grottoes*. It would seem at this place they were much afflicted and humbled, but in what manner is not related ; and also at this place, from the term *grottoes*, that it was a place of caverns and dens, probably where they at first hid and dwelt, till they built a town and cleared the ground. Here they built the places which they called Tocalco and Oztatan.

2d journey. They stopped at a place of *fruit-trees* ; probably meaning, as it was further south, a place where nature was abundant in nuts, grapes, and wild fruit-trees. Here they built a mound or tumulus ; and, in their language, it is called a Teocali.

3d journey ; when they stopped at a place of *herbs*, with *broad leaves* ; probably meaning a place where many succulent plants

grew, denoting a good soil, which invited them to pitch their tents here.

4th journey; when they came to a place of *human bones*; where they, either during their stay, had battles with each other, or with some enemy; or they may have found them already there, the relics of other nations before them; for, according to Humboldt, this migration of the Aztecas took place A. D. 778; so that other nations certainly had preceded them, also from the north.

5th journey; they came to a place of *eagles*.

6th journey; to a place of *precious stones* and *minerals*.

7th journey; to a place of *spinning*, where they manufactured clothing of cotton, barks, or of something proper for clothing of some sort, and mats of rushes and feathers.

8th journey; they came to another place of eagles, called the Eagle Mountain: or, in their own language, *Quauhtli Tepec*: *Tepec*, says Humboldt, in the Turkish language, is the word for mountain; which two words are so near alike, *tepec*, and *tepe*, that it would seem almost an Arab word, or a word used by the Turks.

9th journey; when they came to a place of walls, and the seven grottoes; which shows the place had been inhabited before, and these seven grottoes were either caves in the earth, or were made in the side of some mountain, by those who had preceded them.

10th journey; when they came to a place of thistles, sand, and vultures.

11th journey; when they came to a place of *Obsidian mirrors*, which is much the same with that of rising-glass, scientifically called mica membranacea. This mineral substance is frequently found in the tumuli of the west, and is called by the Mexicans the *shining* god. The obsidian stone, however, needs polishing before it will answer as a mirror.

12th journey; came to a place of water, probably some lake or beautiful fountains, which invited their residence there, on the account not only of the water, but for fishing and game.

13th journey; they came to the place of the *Divine Monkey*, called, in their own language, *Teuzomoco*. In the most ancient Hebrew, this animal is called K-oph, Kooph, and Kuphon: in the

Arabic, which is similar to the Hebrew, it is called K-ha-noos, Khanassa, and Chanass; all of which words bear a strong resemblance to the Mexican Te-oz-o-moco, especially to the Arabic Khanoos. Here, it would seem, they set up the worship of the monkey, or baboon, as the ancient Egyptians are known to have done. This animal is found in Mexico, according to Humboldt.

14th journey; when they came to a high mountain, probably with table lands on it, which they called *Chopaltepec*, or mountain of locusts: "A place," says Baron Humboldt, "celebrated for the magnificent view from the top of this hill;" which, it appears, is in the Mexican country, and probably not far from the vale of Mexico, where they finally and permanently rested.

15th journey; when they came to the vale of Mexico; they here met with the prodigy, or fulfilment of the prophecy, or oracle, predicted at their outset from the country of Aztalan, Huehuetlapallan, and Amaquemacan; which was (see Humboldt, vol. ii. p. 185), that the migrations of the Aztecs should not terminate till the chiefs of the nation should meet with an *eagle*, perched on a *cactus-tree*, or prickly pear; at such a place they might found a city. This was, as their bull-hide books inform us, in the vale of Mexico.

We have related this account of the Azteca migration from the country of Aztalan, Huehuetlapallan, and Amaquemacan, from the regions of north latitude forty-two degrees, merely to show that the country, provinces, or districts, so named in their books, must have been the country of Ohio, Mississippi, and Illinois, with the whole region thereabout; for these are not far from the very latitude named by Humboldt as the region of Aztalan, &c.

The western country is *now* distinguished by the general name of the "lake country;" and why? because it is a country of lakes; and for the same reason it was called by the Mexicans *Azteca*, by the Indians, *Aztalans*, because in their language ATL is water, from which Aztalan is doubtless a derivative, as well also as their own name as a nation or title, which was *Astecas*, or people of the lakes.

This account, derived from the Mexicans since their reduction by the Spaniards, is gathered from the researches of learned travellers, who have, for the very purpose of learning the origin of the

people of this country, penetrated not only into the forest retreats in the woods of Mexico, but into the mysteries of their hard language, their theology, philosophy, and astronomy. This account of their migration, as related above, is corroborated by the tradition of the Wyandot Indians.

We come to a knowledge of this tradition by the means of a Mr. William Walker, some time Indian agent for our government. A pamphlet, published in 1823, by Frederick Falley, of Sandusky, contains Mr. Walker's account, which is as follows: A great many hundred years ago, the ancient inhabitants of America, who were the authors of the great works of the West, were driven away from their country and possessions by barbarous and savage hordes of warriors, who came from the north and north-east, before whose power and skill in war they were compelled to flee, and went to the south.

After having been there many hundred years, a runner came back into the same country whence the ancient people had been driven, which we suppose is the very country of Aztalan, or the region of the Western States, bringing the intelligence that a dreadful *beast* had landed on their coast along the sea, which was spreading among them havoc and death, by means of fire and thunder; and that it would no doubt travel all over the country, for the same purpose of destruction. This beast, whose voice was like thunder, and whose power to kill was like fire, we have no doubt represents the cannon and small arms of the Spaniards, when they first commenced the murder of the people of South America. — [PRIEST.]

TRAITS OF THE MOSAIC HISTORY FOUND AMONG THE AZTECA NATIONS.

THE tradition commences with an account of the deluge, as they had preserved it in books made of the buffalo and deer skin, on which account there is more certainty than if it had been preserved by mere oral tradition, handed down from father to son.

They begin by painting, or, as we would say, by telling us that Noah, whom they call Tezpi, saved himself, with his wife, whom they call Xochiquetzal, on a raft or canoe. Is not this the ark? The raft or canoe rested on or at the foot of a mountain, which they call Colhuacan. Is not this Ararat? The men born after this deluge were born dumb. Is not this the confusion of language at Babel? A *dove* from the top of a tree distributes languages to them in the form of an olive leaf. Is not this the dove of Noah, which returned with that leaf in her mouth, as related in Genesis? They say, that on this *raft*, besides Tezpi and his wife, were several *children*, and animals, with grain, the preservation of which was of importance to mankind. Is not this in almost exact accordance with what was saved in the ark with Noah, as stated in Genesis?

When the Great Spirit, Tezcatlipoca, ordered the waters to withdraw, Tezpi sent out from his raft a *vulture*, which never returned, on account of the great quantities of dead carcasses which it found to feed upon. Is not this the raven of Noah, which did not return when it was sent out the second time, for the very reason here assigned by the Mexicans? Tezpi sent other birds, one of which was the humming-bird; this bird alone returned, holding in its beak a branch covered with leaves Is not this the dove? Tezpi, seeing that fresh verdure now clothed the earth, quitted his raft near the mountain of Colhuacan. Is not this an allusion to Ararat of Asia? They say the tongues which the dove gave to mankind, were infinitely varied; which, when received, they immediately dispersed. But among them there were fifteen *heads* or *chiefs* of families, which were permitted to speak the same language, and these were the Taltecs, the Aculhucans, and Azteca nations, who embodied themselves together, which was very natural, and travelled, they knew not where, but at length arrived in the country of Aztalan, or the lake country in America.

Among the vast multitude of painted representations found by Humboldt, on the books of the natives, made also frequently of prepared skins of animals, were delineated all the leading circumstances and history of the deluge, of the fall of man, and of

the seduction of the woman by the means of the serpent, the first murder as perpetrated by Cain, on the person of his brother Abel.

Among the different nations, according to Humboldt, who inhabited Mexico, were found paintings which represented the deluge, or the flood of Tezpi. The *same* person among the Chinese is called *Fohi* and *Yu-ti*, which is strikingly similar in sound to the Mexican *Tezpi*, in which they show how he saved himself and his wife, in a bark, or some say, in a canoe, others on a raft, which they call, in their language, a huahuate.

Tezpi sent out other birds, one of which was the humming-bird; this bird alone returned again to the boat, holding in its beak a branch, covered with leaves. Tezpi now knowing that the earth was dry, being clothed with fresh verdure, quitted his bark near the mountain Colhucan, or Ararat. A tradition of the same fact, the deluge, is also found among the Indians of the Northwest. I received (says a late traveller) the following account from a chief of one of the tribes, in his own words, in the English: — "An old man, live great while ago, he wery good man, he have three son. The Great Spirit tell him, go make raft — build wigwam on top: for he make it rain wery much. When this done, Great Spirit say, put in two of all the creatures, then take sun, moon — all the stars, put them in — got in himself, with his *Equa*, (wife,) children, shut door, all dark outside. Then it rain much hard, many days. When they stay there long time — Great Spirit say, old man, go out. So he take diving animal, sa goy see if find the earth: so he went, come back, not find any thing. Then he wait few days — send out mushquash, see what he find. When he come back, brought some mud in he paw; old man wery glad; he tell mushquash, you wery good, long this world stand, be plenty mushquash, no man ever kill you all. Then few days more, he take wery prety bird, send him out, see what it find; that bird no come back: so he send out one white bird, that come back, have grass in he mouth. So old man know water going down. The Great Spirit say, old man, let sun, moon, stars go out, old man too. He go out, raft on much big mountain, when he see prety bird, he send out first, eating dead things — he say, bird, you do no right, when me send, you no come back, you must

be black, you no prety bird any more — you always eat bad things So it was black."

The purity of these traditions is evidence of two things: first, that the book of Genesis, as written by Moses, is not, as some have imagined, a cunningly devised fable, as these Indians cannot be accused of Christian nor of Jewish priestcraft, their religion being of another cast. And second, that the continents of America, Europe, Africa, and Asia, were anciently united, so that the *earlier* nations came directly over after the confusion of the ancient language and dispersion — on which account its purity has been preserved more than among the more wandering tribes of the old continents.

As favoring this idea of their (the Mexicans) coming immediately from the region of the tower of Babel, their tradition goes on to inform us, that the tongues distributed by this bird were infinitely various, and dispersed over the earth; but that it so happened that fifteen heads of families were permitted to speak the same language. These travelled till they came to a country which they called Aztalan, supposed to be in the regions of the now United States, according to Humboldt. The word *Aztalan* signifies, in their language, *water*, or a country of much water. Now, no country on the earth better suits this appellation than the western country, on account of the vast number of lakes found there, and it is even, by us, called the lake country.

It is evident that the Indians are not the first people who found their way to this country. Among these ancient nations are found many traditions corresponding to the accounts given by Moses respecting the creation, the fall of man by the means of a serpent, the murder of Abel by his brother, &c.; all of which are denoted in their paintings, as found by the earlier travellers among them, since the discovery of America by Columbus, and carefully copied from their books of prepared hides, which may be called parchment, after the manner of the ancients of the earliest ages. We are pleased when we find such evidence, as it goes to the establishment of the truth of the historical parts of the Old Testament, evidence so far removed from the skeptic's charge

of priestcraft here among the unsophisticated nations of the woods of America.

Clavigero, in his history of Mexico, says that among the Chiapanese Indians was found an ancient manuscript in the language of that country, made by the Indians themselves, in which it was said, according to their ancient tradition, that a certain person, named *Votan*, was present at that great building, which was made by order of his uncle, in order to mount up to heaven; that then every people was given their language, and that Votan himself was charged by God to make the division of the lands of Anahuac — so Noah divided the earth among his sons. Votan may have been Noah, or a grandson of his.

Of the ancient Indians of Cuba, several historians of America relate, that when they were interrogated by the Spaniards concerning their origin, they answered, they had heard from their ancestors, that God created the heavens and the earth, and all things; that an old man, having foreseen the deluge with which God designed to chastise the sins of men, built a large canoe and embarked in it with his family, and many animals; that when the inundation ceased, he sent out a raven, which, because it found food suited to its nature to feed on, never returned to the canoe; that he then sent out a pigeon, which soon returned, bearing a branch of the *Hoba* tree, a certain fruit-tree of America, in its mouth; that when the old man saw the earth dry, he disembarked, and having made himself wine of the wood grape, he became intoxicated and fell asleep; that then one of his sons made ridicule of his nakedness, and that another son piously covered him; that, upon waking, he blessed the latter and cursed the former. Lastly, these islanders held that they had their origin from the accursed son, and therefore went almost naked; that the Spaniards, as they were clothed, descended perhaps from the other.

Many of the nations of America, says Clavigero, have the same tradition, agreeing nearly to what we have already related. It was the opinion of this author, that the nations who peopled the Mexican empire belonged to the posterity of Naphtuhim — (the same, we imagine, with Japheth;) and that their ancestors, having left Egypt not long after the confusion of the ancient language, travel-

led towards America, crossing over on the isthmus, which it is supposed once united America with the African continent, but since has been beaten down by the operation of the waters of the Atlantic on the north, and of the Southern ocean on the south, or by the operation of earthquakes.

Now we consider the comparative perfection of the preservation of this *Bible* account as an evidence that the people among whom it was found must have settled in this country at a very early period of time after the flood, and that they did not wander any more, but peopled the continent, cultivating it, building towns and cities, after their manner, the vestiges of which are so abundant to this day; and on this account, viz., their fixedness, their traditionary history was not as liable to become lost, as it would have undoubtedly been had they wandered, as many other nations of the old world have done. As evidence of the presence of a Hindoo population in the southern, as well as the western parts of North America, we bring the Mexican traditions respecting some great religious teacher who once came among them. These say, that a wonderful personage, whom they name *Quetzalcoatl*, appeared among them, who was a white and bearded man. This person assumed the dignity of acting as a priest and legislator, and became the chief of a religious sect, which, like the Songasis, and the Buddhists of Hindostan, inflicted on themselves the most cruel penances. He introduced the custom of piercing the lips and ears, and lacerating the rest of the body, with the prickles of the agave and leaves, the thorns of the cactus, and of putting reeds into the wounds, in order that the blood might be seen to trickle more copiously. In all this, says Humboldt, we seem to behold one of those Rishi, hermits of the Ganges, whose pious austerity is celebrated in the books of the Hindoos.

Respecting this white and bearded man, much is said in their tradition, recorded in their books of skin; and among other things, that after a long stay with them he suddenly left them, promising to return again in a short time, to govern them and renew their happiness. This person resembles, very strongly, in his promise to return again, the behavior of Lycurgus, the Spartan lawgiver, who, on his departure from Lacedæmon, bound all the citizens

under an oath, both for themselves and posterity, that they would neither violate nor abolish his laws till his return; and soon after, in the Isle of Crete, he put himself to death, so that his return became impossible.

It was the posterity of this man whom the unhappy Montezuma thought he recognised in the soldiers of Cortez, the Spanish conqueror of Mexico. "We know," said the unhappy monarch, in his first interview with the Spanish general, "by our books, that myself, and those who inhabit this country, are not natives, but strangers, who came from a great distance. We know, also, that the chief who led our ancestors hither returned, for a certain time, to his primitive country, and thence came back to seek those who were here established, who after a while returned again, alone. We always believed that his descendants would one day come to take possession of this country. Since you arrive from that region where the *sun rises*, I cannot doubt but that the king who sends you is our natural master."

Humboldt says that the Azteca tribes left their country, Aztalan, in the year of our Lord 544; and wandered to the south or southwest, coming at last to the vale of Mexico. It would appear from this view, that as the nations of Aztalan, with their fellow nations, left vast works, and a vast extent of country, apparently in a state of cultivation, with cities and villages, more in number than three thousand, as Breckenridge supposed, they must, therefore, have settled here long before the Christian era.

And this Quetzalcoatl, a celebrated minister of these opinions, appears to have been the *first* who announced the religion of the east among the people of the west. There was also one other minister, or Brahmin, who appeared among the Mozca tribes in South America, whom they named *Bochica*. This personage taught the worship of the sun; and, if we were to judge, we should pronounce him a missionary of the Confucian system, a worshipper of fire, which was the religion of the ancient Persians, of whose country Confucius was a native. This also is evidence that the first inhabitants of America came here at a period near the flood, long before that worship was known, or they would have had a knowledge of this Persian worship, which was intro-

duced by *Bochica* among the American nations, which, it seems, they had not, until taught by this man.

Bochica, it appears, became a legislator among those nations, and changed the form of their government to a form, the construction of which, says Baron Humboldt, bears a strong analogy to the governments of Japan and Thibet, on account of the *pontiffs* holding in their hands both the secular and the spiritual reins. In Japan, an island on the east of Asia, or rather many islands, which compose the Japanese empire, is found a religious sect, styled *Sinto*, who do not believe in the sanguinary rites of shedding either human blood, or that of animals, to propitiate their gods; they even abstain from animal food, and detest bloodshed, and will not touch any dead body.—(*Morse's Geography*, p. 523.)

There is in South America a whole nation who eat nothing but vegetables, and who hold in abhorrence those who feed on flesh. —(*Humboldt*, p. 200.)

Such a coincidence in the religion of nations can scarcely be supposed to exist, unless they are of one origin. Therefore, from what we have related above, and a few pages back, it is clear, both from the tradition of the Aztecas, who lived in the western regions before they went to the south, and from the fact that nations on the Asiatic side of Bhering's Strait have come *annually* over the strait to fight the nations of the northwest, that we, in this way, have given conclusive and satisfactory reasons why, in the western mounds and tumuli, are found evident tokens of the presence of a Hindoo population; or, at least, of nations influenced by the superstitions of that people, through the means of missionaries of those castes, and that they did not bring those opinions and ceremonies with them when they *first* left Asia, after the confusion of the antediluvian language, as led on by their fifteen chiefs; till, by some means, and at some period, they finally found this country—not by the way of Bhering's Strait, but by some nearer course.

Perhaps a few words on the supposed native country of Quetzalcoatl may be allowed; who, as we have stated, is reported to have been a *white* and *bearded* man, by the Mexican Aztecas.

There is a vast range of islands on the northeast of Asia, in the Pacific, situated not very far from Bhering's Strait, in latitude between forty and fifty degrees north. The inhabitants of these islands, when first discovered, were found to be far in advance in the arts and civilization, and a knowledge of government, of their continental neighbors, the Chinese and Tartars. The island of Jesso, in particular, is of itself an empire, comparatively, being very populous, and its people are also highly polished in their manners. The inhabitants may be denominated white — their women especially, whom Morse, in his geography of the Japan, Jesso, and other islands in that range, says expressly are white, fair, and ruddy. Humboldt says they are a bearded race of men, like Europeans.

It appears that the ancient government of these islands, especially that of Japan, which is neighbor to that of Jesso, was in the hands of spiritual monarchs and pontiffs till the seventeenth century. As this was the form of government introduced by Quetzalcoatl, when he first appeared among the Azteca tribes, which we suppose was in the country of Aztalan, or Western States, may it not be conjectured that he was a native of some of those islands, who in his wanderings had found his way hither, on errands of benevolence; as it is said in the tradition respecting him, that he preached peace among men, and would not allow any other offering to the divinity than the first fruits of the harvest, which doctrine was in character with the mild and amiable manners of the inhabitants of those islands. And that peculiar and striking record, found painted on the Mexican skin-books, which describes him to have been a white and bearded man, is our other reason for supposing him to have been a native of some of these islands, and most probably Jesso, rather than any other country.

The inhabitants of these islands originated from China, and with them undoubtedly carried the Persian doctrines of the worship of the sun and fire; consequently, we find it taught to the people of Aztalan and Mexico, by such as visited them from China or the islands above named; as it is clear the sun was not the original object of adoration in Mexico, but rather the power which made the sun. So Noah worshipped.

Their traditions also recognise another important chief, who led

the Azteca tribes *first* to the country of Aztalan, long before the appearance of Quetzalcoatl or Bochica among them. This great leader they name Tecpaltzin, and doubtless allude to the time when they first found their way to America, and settled in the western region.—[PRIEST.]

ORIGIN OF FIRE-WORSHIP.

For many ages the false religions of the East had remained stationary; but in this period, *magianism* received considerable strength from the writings of Zoroaster. He was a native of Media. He pretended to a visit in heaven, where God spoke to him out of a fire. This fire he pretended to bring with him on his return. It was considered holy—the dwelling of God. The priests were for ever to keep it, and the people were to worship before it. He caused fire-temples everywhere to be erected, that storms and tempests might not extinguish it. As he considered God as dwelling in the fire, he made the sun to be his chief residence, and therefore the *primary* object of worship. He abandoned the old system of two gods, one good and the other evil, and taught the existence of one Supreme, who had under him a good and evil angel—the immediate authors of good and evil. To gain reputation, he retired into a cave, and there lived a long time a recluse, and composed a book called the *Zend-Avesta*, which contains the liturgy to be used in the fire-temples, and the chief doctrines of his religion. His success in propagating his system was astonishingly great. Almost all the eastern world, for a season, bowed before him. He is said to have been slain, with eighty of his priests, by a Scythian prince, whom he attempted to convert to his religion.

It is manifest that he derived his whole system of God's dwelling in the fire, from the burning bush, out of which God spake to Moses. He was well acquainted with the Jewish Scriptures. He gave the same history of the creation and deluge that Moses had given, and inserted a great part of the Psalms of David into his

writings. The Mehestani, his followers; believed in the immortality of the soul, in future rewards and punishments, and in the purification of the body by fire; after which they would be united to the good. — (*Marsh's Ecclesiastical History*, p. 78.) From the same origin, that of the burning bush, it is altogether probable the worship of fire, for many ages, obtained over the whole habitable earth; and is still to be traced in the funeral piles of the Hindoos, the beacon-fires of the Scotch and Irish, the periodical midnight fires of the Mexicans, and the council-fires of the North American Indians, around which they dance.

A custom among the natives of New Mexico, as related by Baron Humboldt, is exactly imitated by a practice found still in some parts of Ireland, among the descendants of the ancient Irish.

At the commencement of the month of November, the great fire of *Sumhuin* is lit up, all the culinary fires in the kingdom being first extinguished, as it was deemed sacrilege to awaken the winter's social flame except by a spark snatched from this sacred fire; on which account, the month of November is called, in the Irish language, Sumhuin.

To this day, the inferior Irish look upon bonfires as sacred; they say their prayers walking round them, the young dream upon their ashes, and the old take this fire to light up their domestic hearths, imagining some secret undefinable excellence connected with it. — [PRIEST.]

GREAT STONE CALENDAR OF THE MEXICANS.

THIS stone was found near the site of the present city of Mexico, buried some feet beneath the soil, on which is engraven a great number of hieroglyphics, signifying the divisions of time, the motions of the heavenly bodies, the twelve signs of the Zodiac, with reference to the feasts and sacrifices of the Mexicans, and is called by Humboldt the *Mexican Calendar*, in relief, on basalt, a kind of stone.

This deservedly celebrated historiographer and antiquarian has devoted a hundred pages and more of his octavo work, entitled "*Researches in America*," in describing the similarity which exists between its representations of astrology, astronomy, and the divisions of time, and those of a great multitude of the nations of Asia — Chinese, Japanese, Calmucks, Mongols, Mantchaus, and other Tartar nations; the Egyptians, Babylonians, Persians; Phœnicians, Greeks, Romans, Hebrews, and ancient Celtic nations of Europe. (See the American edition by Helen Maria Williams, vol. i.) The size of this stone was very great, being a fraction over twelve feet square, three feet in thickness, weighing twenty-four tons. It is of the kind of stone denominated trappean porphyry, of the blackish gray color.

The place where it was found was more than thirty miles from any quarry of the kind; from which we discover the ability of the ancient inhabitants not only to transport stones of great size, as well as the ancient Egyptians, in building their cities and temples of marble, but also to cut and engrave on stone, equal with the present age.

It was discovered in the vale of Mexico, in A. D. 1791, in the spot where Cortez ordered it to be buried, when, with his ferocious Spaniards, that country was devastated. That Spaniard universally broke to pieces all images of stone which came in his way, except such as were too large and strong to be quickly and easily thus affected. Such he buried, among which this sculptured stone was one. This was done to hide them from the sight of the natives, whose strong attachment, whenever they saw them, counteracted their conversion to the Roman Catholic religion.

The sculptured work on this stone is in circles; the outer one of all is a trifle over twenty-seven feet in circumference — from which the reader can have a tolerable notion of its size and appearance. The whole stone is intensely crowded with representations and hieroglyphics, arranged, however, in order and harmony, every way equal with any astronomical calendar of the present day. It is further described by Baron Humboldt, who saw and examined it on the spot: —

"The concentric circles, the numerous divisions and subdivisions engraven on this stone, are traced with mathematical precision. The more minutely the detail of this sculpture is examined, the greater the taste we find in the repetition of the same forms. In the centre of the stone is sculptured the celebrated sign *nahuiolin-Tonatiuh*, the SUN, which is surrounded by eight triangular radii. The god *Tonatiuh*, or the sun, is figured on this stone, opening his large mouth, armed with teeth, with the tongue protruded to a great length. This yawning mouth and protruded tongue is like the image of *Kala*, or, in another word, *Time* — a divinity of Hindostan. Its dreadful mouth, armed with teeth, is meant to show that the god Tonatiuh, or Time, swallows the world, opening a fiery mouth, devouring the years, months, and days, as fast as they come into being. The same image we find under the name of *Moloch* among the Phœnicians, some of the ancient inhabitants on the eastern side of the Mediterranean, from which very country there can be but little doubt America received a portion of its earliest inhabitants." Hence a knowledge of the arts to great perfection, as found among the Mexicans, was thus derived. Humboldt says the Mexicans have evidently followed the Persians in the division of time, as represented on this stone. The Persians flourished one thousand years before Christ.

"The structure of the Mexican aqueducts leads the imagination at once to the shores of the Mediterranean."—(*Thomas's Travels*, p. 293.) The size, grandeur, and riches of the tumuli on the European and Asiatic sides of the Cimmerian strait (which unites the Black sea with the Archipelago, a part of the Mediterranean, the region of ancient Greece, where the capital of Turkey in Europe now stands, called Constantinople), "excite astonishing ideas of the wealth and power of the people by whom they were constructed."

But whatever power, wealth, genius, magnitude of tumuli, mounds and pyramids are found about the Mediterranean — where the Egyptian, the Phœnician, the Persian, and the Greek, have displayed the monuments of this most ancient sort of antiquities — all, all is realized in North and South America, and doubtless under the influence of the same superstition and eras of time, —

having crossed over, as before argued; and among the various aboriginal nations of South and North America, but especially the former, are undoubtedly found the descendants of the fierce Medes and Persians, and other warlike nations of the old world.

The discoveries of travellers in that country show, even at the present time, that the ancient customs in relation to securing their habitations with a wall still prevail. Towns in the interior of Africa, on the river Niger, of great extent, are found to be surrounded by walls of earth, in the same manner as those of the West in North America.

See the account as given by Richard Lander: "On the 4th of May, we entered a town of prodigious extent, fortified with three walls of little less than twenty miles in circuit, with ditches or moats between. This town, called *Boo-hoo*, is in the latitude of about eight degrees forty-three minutes north, and longitude five degrees and ten minutes east. On the 17th, we came to *Roossa*, which is a cluster of huts walled with earth."

This traveller states that there is a kingdom in Africa called *Yaorie*, which is large, powerful, and flourishing, containing a city of prodigious extent. The wall surrounding it is of clay, very high, and in circuit between twenty and thirty miles. He mentions several other places, similarly enclosed by earth walls.

It is easy to perceive the resemblance between these walled towns in central Africa, and the remains of similar works in this country, America.—[PRIEST.]

SCIENTIFIC ACQUIREMENTS OF ANCIENT BUILDERS IN THE WEST.

As it respects the scientific acquirements of the builders of the works in the West, now in ruins, Mr. Atwater says: "When thoroughly examined, they have furnished matter of admiration to all intelligent persons who have attended to the subject. Nearly all the lines of ancient works found in the whole country, where the form of the ground admits of it, are right ones, pointing to the

four cardinal points. Where there are mounds enclosed, the gateways are most frequently on the east side of the works, towards the rising sun. Where the situation admits of it, in their military works, the openings are generally towards one or more of the *cardinal points*. From which it is supposed they must have had some knowledge of astronomy, or their structures would not, it is imagined, have been thus arranged. From these circumstances, also, we draw the conclusion, that the first inhabitants of America emigrated from Asia, at a period coeval with that of Babylon, for here it was that astronomical calculations were first made, 2234 years before Christ.

"These things could never have so happened, with such invariable exactness in almost all cases, without design. On the whole," says Atwater, "I am convinced from an attention to many hundreds of these works, in every part of the West which I have visited, that their authors had a knowledge of astronomy.

"Our ancient works continued into Mexico, increasing in size and grandeur, preserving the same forms, and appear to have been put to the same uses. The form of our works is round, square, triangular, semicircular, and octangular, agreeing, in all these respects with those in Mexico. The first works built by the Mexicans were mostly of earth, and not much superior to the common ones on the Mississippi." The same may be said of the works of this sort over the whole earth, which is the evidence that all alike belong to the first efforts of men in the very first ages after the flood.

"But afterwards temples were erected on the elevated squares, circles, &c., but were still, like ours, surrounded by walls of earth. These sacred places, in Mexico, were called '*teocalli*,' which in the vernacular tongue of the *most ancient* tribe of Mexicans, signifies '*mansions of the gods*.' They included within their sacred walls, gardens, fountains, habitations of priests, temples, altars, and magazines of arms. This circumstance may account for many things which have excited some surprise among those who have hastily visited the works on Paint creek, at Portsmouth, Marietta, Circleville, Newark, &c.

"It is doubted by many to what use these works were put;

whether they were used as forts, camps, cemeteries, altars, and temples; whereas they contained all these either within their walls or were immediately connected with them. Many persons cannot imagine why the works at the places above mentioned were so extensively complicated, differing so much in form, size, and elevation, among themselves." But the solution is, undoubtedly, "they contained within them altars, temples, cemeteries, habitations of priests, gardens, wells, fountains, places devoted to sacred purposes of various kinds, and the whole of their warlike munitions, laid up in arsenals. These works were calculated for defence, and were resorted to in cases of the last necessity, where they fought with desperation. We are warranted in this conclusion, by knowing that these works are exactly similar to the most ancient now to be seen in Mexico, connected with the fact, that the Mexican works did contain within them *all* that we have stated."—[PRIEST.]

PREDILECTION OF THE ANCIENTS TO PYRAMIDS.

IN those early ages of mankind, it is evident there existed an unaccountable ambition among the nations, seemingly to outdo each other in the height of their pyramids; for Humboldt mentions the pyramids of Porsenna, as related by Varro, styled the most learned of the Romans, who flourished about the time of Christ; and says there were at this place four pyramids, eighty meters in height, which is a fraction more than *fifteen* rods perpendicular altitude: the meter is a French measure, consisting of three feet three inches.

Not many years since was discovered, by some Spanish hunters, on descending the Cordilleras toward the Gulf of Mexico, in the thick forest, the pyramid of Papantla. The form of this teocalli or pyramid, which had seven stories, is more tapering than any other monument of this kind yet discovered, but its height is not remarkable, being but fifty-seven feet — its base but twenty-five feet on each side. However, it is remarakable on one

account: it is built entirely of hewn stones, of an extraordinary size, and very beautifully shaped. Three stair-cases lead to its top, the steps of which were decorated with hieroglyphical sculpture and small niches, arranged with great symmetry. The number of these niches seems to allude to the 318 simple and compound signs of the days of their civil calendar. If so, this monument was erected for astronomical purposes. Besides, here is evidence of the use of metallic tools, in the preparation and building of this temple.

In those mounds were sometimes hidden the treasures of kings and chiefs, placed there in times of war and danger. Such was found to be the fact on opening the tomb of a Peruvian prince, when was discovered a mass of pure gold, amounting to 4,687,500 dollars. — (*Humboldt's Researches*, vol. i. p. 92.)

There is, in Central America, to the south-east of the city of Cuernuvaca, on the west declivity of Anahuac, an isolated hill, which, together with the pyramid raised on its top by the ancients of that country, amounts to thirty-five rods ten feet altitude. The ancient tower of Babel, around which the city of Babylon was afterward built, was a mere nothing compared with the gigantic work of Anahuac, being but twenty-four hundred feet square, which is one hundred and fifty rods, or nearly so; while the hill we are speaking of, partly natural and partly artificial, is at its base twelve thousand and sixty-six feet: this, thrown into rods, gives seven hundred and fifty-four, and into miles, is two and three eighths, wanting eight rods, which is five times greater than that of Babel.

This hill is a mass of rocks, to which the hand of man has given a regular conic form, and which is divided into five stories or terraces, each of which is covered with masonry. These terraces are nearly sixty feet in perpendicular height, one above the other, besides the artificial mound added at the top, making its height near that of Babel; besides, the whole is surrounded with a deep broad ditch, more than five times the circumference of the Babylonian tower.

We learn from Scripture that in the earliest times the temples of Asia, such as that of Baal-Berith, at Shechem, in Canaan, were not only buildings consecrated to worship, but also intrenchments

in which the inhabitants of a city defended themselves in times of war; the same may be said of the Grecian temples, for the wall which formed the parabolas alone afforded an asylum to the besieged.—[PRIEST.]

THE REMAINS OF CITIES.

THE remains of cities and towns of an ancient population exist everywhere on the coast of the Pacific, which agree in fashion with the works and ruins found along the Chinese coasts, exactly west from the western limits of North America; showing beyond all dispute that in ancient times the countries were known to each other, and voyages were reciprocally made. The style of their shipping was such as to be equal to voyages of that distance, and also sufficient to withstand stress of weather, even beyond vessels of the present times, on account of their great depth of keel and size.—[PRIEST.]

RUINS OF THE CITY OF OTOLUM, DISCOVERED IN NORTH AMERICA.

"SOME years ago, the Society of Geography, in Paris, offered a large premium for a voyage to Guatemala, and for a new survey of the antiquities of Yucatan and Chiapa, chiefly those fifteen miles from Palenque."

"They were surveyed by Captain Del Rio, in 1787, an account of which was published in English in 1822. This account describes partly the ruins of a *stone* city, of no less dimensions than seventy-five miles in circuit, length thirty-two, and breadth twelve miles, full of palaces, monuments, statues, and *inscriptions;* one of the earliest seats of American civilization, about equal to Thebes of ancient Egypt."

It is stated in the Family Magazine, Vol. I., p. 266, as follows:

"Public attention has been recently excited respecting the ruins of an *ancient* city found in Guatemala. It would seem that these ruins are now being explored, and much curious and valuable matter in a literary and historical point of view is anticipated. We deem the present a most auspicious moment, now that the public attention is turned to the subject, to spread its contents before our readers, as an introduction to future discoveries during the researches now in progress."

The following are some particulars, as related by Captain Del Rio, who partially examined them as above related, 1787: From Palenque, the last town northward in the province of *Ciudad Real de Chiapa*, taking a southwesterly direction, and ascending a ridge of high land that divides the kingdom of Guatemala from Yucatan, at the distance of six miles, is the little river *Micol*, whose waters flow in a westerly direction, and unite with the great river *Tulija*, which bends its course towards the province of *Tabasco*. Having passed Micol, the ascent begins; and at half a league, or a mile and a half, the traveller crosses a little stream called OTOLUM; from this point heaps of stone ruins are discovered, which render the roads very difficult for another half league; when you gain the height whereon the stone houses are situated, being still fourteen in number in one place, some more dilapidated than others, yet still having many of their apartments perfectly discernible.

Here is a rectangular area, three hundred yards in breadth by four hundred and fifty in length, which is a fraction over fifty-six rods wide, and eighty-four rods long, being, in the whole circuit, two hundred and eighty rods, which is three-fourths of a mile, and a trifle over. This area presents a plain at the base of the highest mountain forming the ridge. In the centre of this plain is situated the largest of the structures which has been as yet discovered among these ruins. It stands on a mound or pyramid twenty yards high, which is sixty feet, or nearly four rods in perpendicular altitude, which gives it a lofty and beautiful majesty, as if it were a temple suspended in the sky. This is surrounded by other edifices, namely, five to the northward, four to the southward, one to the southwest, and three to the eastward — fourteen

in all. In all directions the fragments of other fallen buildings are seen extending along the mountain that stretches east and west either way from these buildings, as if they were the great temple of worship, or their government house, around which they built their city, and where dwelt their kings and officers of state. At this place was found a subterranean stone aqueduct, of great solidity and durability, which in its course passes beneath the largest building.

Let it be understood, this city of Otolum, the ruins of which are so immense, is in North, not South America, in the same latitude with the island of Jamaica, which is about eighteen degrees north of the equator, being on the highest ground between the northern end of the Caribbean sea and the Pacific ocean, where the continent narrows towards the isthmus of Darien, and is about eight hundred miles south of New Orleans.

The discovery of these ruins, and also of many others, equally wonderful, in the same country, is just commencing to arouse the attention of the schools of Europe, who hitherto have denied that America could boast of her antiquities. But these immense ruins are now being explored under the direction of scientific persons, a history of which, in detail, will be forthcoming doubtless, in due time; two volumes of which, in manuscript, we are informed, have already been written, and cannot but be received with enthusiasm by Americans.

By those deeply versed in the antiquities of past ages, it is contended that the first people who settled America came directly from Chaldea, immediately after the confusion of language at Babel.—(*See Description of the Ruins of the American City, published in London*, 1832, p. 33, *by Dr. Paul Felix Cabrera.*) Whoever the authors of the city may have been, we seem to find, in their sculptured deities, the idolatry of even the Phœnicians, a people whose history goes back nearly to the flood, or to within a hundred and fifty years of that period.

It appears from some of the historical works of the Mexicans, written in pictures, which fell into the hands of the Spaniards, that there was found one which was written by *Votan*, who sets himself forth to be the third Gentile, (reckoning from the flood or

family of Noah,) and lord of the *Tapanahuasec*, or the sacred drum. In the book above alluded to, Votan says that he saw the great house which was built by his grandfather, meaning the tower of Babel, which went up from the earth to the sky. In one of those picture books, the account is given by the Indian historian, whoever he was, or at whatever time he lived, that Votan had written it himself. He gives the account that he made no less than four voyages to this continent, conducting with him at one time seven families. He says that others of his family had gone away before himself, and that he was determined to travel till he should come to the *root* of heaven, the sky, (in the west,) in order to discover his relations the *Culebras*, or Snake people, and calls himself *Culebra*, (a snake,) and that he found them, and became their captain. He mentions the name of the town which his relation had built at first, which was *Tezequil*.

Agreeing with this account, it is found by exploring the ruins of this city, and its sculptures, that among a multitude of strange representations are found two which represent this *Votan*, on both continents. The continents are shown by being painted in two parallel squares, and standing on each is this Votan, showing his acquaintance with each of them. The pictures engraven on the stones which form the sides of the houses or temples of this ruined city, are a series of hieroglyphics, which show, beyond all doubt, that the era of its construction, and of the people who built it, excels in antiquity those of the ancient Greeks, the Romans, and the most celebrated nations of the old world, and is worthy of being compared even with the first progenitors of the Hebrews themselves, after the flood. — (*See History of American City, as before quoted*, p. 39.)

It is found that the gods of the ancient Egyptians, even *Osiris*, *Apis*, and *Isis*, are sculptured on the stones of this city, the worship of which passed from Egypt to many nations, and is found under many forms, but all traceable to the same original. We have examined the forms of the figures cut on the side of the famous Obelisk of seventy-two feet in height, brought not long since from Egypt, by the French government, and erected in Paris; and have compared them with some of the sculptured forms of

men, found on the stones of this city, in which there is an exact correspondence in one remarkable particular. On the obelisk is represented a king or god seated on a throne, holding in one hand a rod grasped in its middle, having on its top the figure of a small bird.

The arm holding this is extended toward a person who is resting on one knee before him, and offers from each of his hands that which is either food, drink, or incense, to the one on the throne. The head ornaments are of the most fantastic construction. The same without variation is cut in the stones of the ruined American city in many places; with this difference only, the American sculpture is much larger, as if representing gigantic beings, but is of the same character. Can we have a better proof than this, that Egyptian colonies have reached America in the very first ages of the world after the flood, or some people having the notions, the religion, and the arts of the Egyptians, and such were the most ancient people of Canaan, the Hivites, Perizzites, and Hitites, which names denote all these nations as serpent worshippers.

As it respects the *true founders* of this city, the discovery and contents of which are now causing so great and general interest in both this country and Europe, it is ascertained in the most direct and satisfactory way, in the work to which we have just alluded, published in London, 1832, on the subject of this city, that they were the ancient *Hivites*, one of the nations which inhabited Palestine, or Canaan, a remnant of which, it is ascertained, fled into the kingdom of Tyre, and there settled, and into Africa, to avoid annihilation by the wars of Joshua, the captain of the Jews; and that among them was one who acted as a leader, and was called *Votan*, and that he sailed from a port in ancient Tyre, which before it was known by that name, was called *Chivim*, and that this Votan was the third in the Gentile descent from Noah, and that he made several voyages to and from America. But the kingdom which was founded by Votan, was finally destroyed by other nations, and their works, their cities and towns, turned into a wilderness, as they are now found to be. (The word *Hivite*, which distinguished one of the nations of old Ca-

naan in the time of Joshua, signifies the same thing in the Phœnician language, Serpent people or worshippers.) The *Hivites*, it appears, were the ancestors of the Moors, who spread themselves all along the western coast of Africa, at an early period, and in later times they overran the country of Spain, till the Romans supplanted them; who in their turn were supplanted by the northern nations of Germany, the Goths, &c. The Moors were not the proper Africans, as the hair of their heads was long, straight, and shining. They were a different race, and of different manners and attainments. The contour of the faces of the authors of the American city, found sculptured on the stones of its ruins, are in exact correspondence with the *forehead* and *nose* of the ancient Moors, the latter of which was remarkable for its aquiline shape, and was a national trait, characteristic of the Moors as well as the Romans.

When the Spaniards overran Peru, which lies on the western side of South America, on the coast of the Pacific were found statues, obelisks, mausolea, edifices, fortresses, all of stone, equal with the architecture of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, six hundred years before the Christian era. Roads were cut through the Cordillera mountains; gold, silver, copper, and lead mines, were opened and worked to a great extent; all of which is evidence of their knowledge of architecture, mineralogy, and agriculture. In many places of that country are found the ruins of noble aqueducts, some of which, says Dr. Morse, the geographer, would have been thought works of difficulty in civilized nations. Several pillars of stone are now standing, which were erected to point out the equinoxes and solstices. In their sepulchres were found paintings, vessels of gold and silver, implements of warfare, husbandry, &c. To illustrate the architectural knowledge of the Peruvians, as well as of some other provinces of South America, we quote the following from Baron Humboldt's Researches, 1st vol. Eng. Trans., Amer. ed., p. 255:—"The remains of Peruvian architecture are scattered along the ridge of the Cordilleras, from Cuzco to Cajambe, or from the 13th degree of north latitude to the equator, a distance of nearly a thousand miles. What an empire, and what works are these, which all bear the same charac-

ter in the cut of the stones, the shape of the doors to their stone buildings, the symmetrical disposal of the niches, and the total absence of exterior ornaments! This uniformity of construction is so great, that all the stations along the high road, called in that country palaces of the Incas, or kings of the Peruvians, appear to have been copied from each other; simplicity, symmetry, and solidity, were the three characters by which the Peruvian edifices were distinguished. The citadel of Cannar, and the square building surrounding it, are not constructed with the same quartz sandstone which covers the primitive slate, and the porphyries of Assuay; and which appears at the surface, in the garden of the Inca, as we descend toward the valley of Gulan; but of *trappean porphyry*, of great hardness, enclosing nitrous feldspar and hornblende. This porphyry was perhaps dug in the *great* quarries which are found at 4000 meters in height, (which is 13,000 feet and a fraction, making two and a third miles in perpendicular height,) near the lake of Culebrilla, or Serpent lake, ten miles from Cannar. To cut the stones for the buildings of Cannar, at so great a height, and to bring them down and transport them ten miles, is equal with any of the works of the ancients, who built the cities of Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabia, long before the Christian era.

"We do not find, however," says Humboldt, "in the ruins of Cannar, those stones of enormous size, which we see in the Peruvian edifices of Cuzco and the neighboring countries. Acosto, he says, measured some at Traquanaco, which were twelve meters (thirty-eight feet) long, and five meters eight tenths (eighteen feet) broad, and one metre nine tenths (six feet) thick." The stones made use of in building the temple of Solomon were but a trifle larger than these, some of which were twenty-five cubits (forty-three feet nine inches) long, twelve cubits (twenty-nine feet) wide, and eight cubits (fourteen feet) thick, reckoning twenty-one inches to the cubit."

"One of the temples of ancient Egypt is now, in its state of ruin, a mile and a half in circumference. It has twelve principal entrances. The body of the temple consists of a prodigious hall or portico; the roof is supported by 134 columns. Four beauti-

ful obelisks mark the entrance to the shrine, a place of sacrifice, which contains three apartments, built entirely of granite. The temple of *Luxor* probably surpasses in beauty and splendor all the other ruins of Egypt. In front are two of the *finest obelisks* in the world; they are of rose-colored marble, one hundred feet high. But the objects which most attract attention, are the *sculptures* which cover the whole of the northern front. They contain, on a great scale, a representation of a victory gained by one of the ancient kings of Egypt over an enemy. The number of human figures cut in the solid stone amounts to fifteen hundred; of these, five hundred are on foot, and one thousand in chariots. Such are the remains of a city which perished long before the records of ancient history had a being."—*Malte-Brun.*

We are compelled to ascribe some of the vast operations of the ancient nations of this country, to those ages which correspond with the times and manners of the people of Egypt, which are also beyond the reach of authentic history. It should be recollected that the fleets of king Hiram navigated the seas in a surprising manner, seeing they had not, as is supposed, (but not proved,) a knowledge of the magnetic needle; and in some voyage out of the Mediterranean, into the Atlantic, they may have been driven to South America; where having found a country rich in all the resources of nature, more so than even their native country, they founded a kingdom, built cities, cultivated fields, marshalled armies, made roads, built aqueducts, became rich, magnificent, and powerful, as the vastness and extent of the ruins of Peru, and other provinces of South America, plainly show.

Humboldt says, that he saw at Pullal three houses made of stone, which were built by the Incas, (kings,) each of which was more than fifty meters, or a hundred and fifty feet long, laid in a cement, or true mortar. This fact, he says, deserves attention, because travellers who had preceded him had unanimously overlooked this circumstance, asserting that the Peruvians were unacquainted with the use of mortar, but this is erroneous. The Peruvians not only employed a mortar in the great edifices of Pacaritambo, but made use of a cement of *asphaltum;* a mode of construction which, on the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris,

may be traced back to the remotest antiquity. The tools made use off to cut their stone were of copper, hardened with tin, the same metal used among the Greeks and Romans, and other nations.

To show the genius and enterprise of the natives of Mexico, before America was last discovered, we give the following as but a single instance: Montezuma, the last king but one of Mexico, A. D. 1446, forty-six years before the discovery of America by Columbus, erected a dike to prevent the overflowing of the waters of certain small lakes in the vicinity of their city, which had several times deluged it. This dike consisted of a bank of stones and clay, supported on each side by a range of palisadoes; extending in its whole length about seventy miles, and sixty-five feet broad, its whole length sufficiently high to intercept the overflowings of the lakes in times of high water, occasioned by the spring floods. In Holland, the Dutch have resorted to the same means to prevent incursions of the sea; and the longest of the many is but forty miles in extent, nearly one half short of the Mexican dike. "Amidst the extensive plains of Upper Canada, in Florida, near the gulf of Mexico, and in the deserts bordered by the Orinoco, in Colombia, dikes of a considerable length, weapons of brass, and sculptured stones, are found, which are the indications that those countries were formerly inhabited by industrious nations, which are now traversed only by tribes of savage hunters."—[PRIEST.]

ANCIENT LANGUAGES OF THE FIRST INHABITANTS OF AMERICA.

Letter to M. Champollion, on the Graphic Systems of America, and the Glyphs of Otolum or Palenque, in Central America.—*By* C. S. RAFINESQUE.

You have become celebrated by deciphering, at last, the glyphs and characters of the ancient Egyptians, which all your learned predecessors had deemed a riddle, and pronounced impossible to

read. You first announced your discovery in a letter. I am going to follow your footsteps on another continent, and a theme equally obscure; to none but yourself can I address with more propriety letters on a subject so much alike in purpose and importance, and so similar to your own labors.

I shall not enter at present into any very elaborate discussion. I shall merely detail, in a concise manner, the object and result of my inquiries, so as to assert my claim to a discovery of some importance in a philological and historical point of view: which was announced as early as 1828 in some journals (three letters to Mr. M'Culloch on the American nations), but not properly illustrated. Their full development would require a volume, like that of yours on the Egyptian antiquities, and may follow this perhaps at some future time.

It may be needful to prefix the following principles as guides to my researches, or results of my inquiries: —

1. America has been the land of false systems; all those made in Europe on it are more or less vain and erroneous.

2. The Americans were equal in antiquity, civilization, and sciences, to the nations of Africa and Europe — like them, the children of the Asiatic nations.

3. It is false that no American nations had systems of writing, glyphs, and letters. Several had various modes of perpetuating ideas.

4. There were several such graphic systems in America to express ideas, all of which find equivalents in the east continent.

5. They may be ranged in twelve series, proceeding from the most simple to the most complex.

1*st Series.* — Pictured symbols or glyphs of the Toltecas, Aztecas, Huaztecas, Skeres, Patlos, &c.; similar to the first symbols of the Chinese, invented by Tien-hoang, before the flood and earliest Egyptian glyphs.

2*d Series.* — Outlines of figures or abridged symbols and glyphs, expressing words or ideas, used by almost all the nations of North and South America, even the most rude; similar to the second kind of Egyptian symbols, and the tortoise letters brought to China by the *Longma* (dragon and horse) nation of barbarous horsemen, under *Sui-gin*.

3d Series. — Quipos or knots on strings used by the Peruvians and several other South American nations; similar to the third kind of Chinese glyphs introduced under *Yong-Ching*, and used also by many nations of Africa.

4th Series. — Wampums, or strings of shells and beads, used by many nations of North America; similar to those used by some ancient or rude nations in all parts of the world, as tokens of ideas.

5th Series. — Runic glyphs or marks, and notches on twigs or lines, used by several nations of North America; consimilar to the Runic glyphs of the Celtic and Teutonic nations.

6th Series. — Runic marks and dots, or graphic symbols, not on strings nor lines, but in rows, expressing words or ideas; used by the ancient nations of North America and Mexico, the Talegas, Aztecas, Natchez, Powhatans, Tuscaroras, &c., and also the Muhizcas of South America; similar to the ancient symbols of the Etruscans, Egyptians, Celts, &c., and the *Ho-tu* of the Chinese, invented by *Tsang-kie*, called also the *Ko-teu-chu* letters, which were in use in China till 827 before our era.

7th Series. — Alphabetical symbols, expressing syllables or sounds, not words, but grouped, and the groups disposed in rows; such is the graphic system of the monuments of Otolum, near Palenque, the American Thebes; consimilar to the groups of alphabetical symbols used by the ancient Libyans, Egyptians, Persians, and also the last graphic system of the Chinese, called *Ventze*, invented by *Sse-hoang*.

8th Series. — Cursive symbols in groups, and the groups in parallel rows, derived from the last (which are chiefly monumental), and used in the manuscripts of the Mayans, Guatemalans, &c.; consimilar to the actual cursive Chinese, some demotic Egyptian, and many modifications of ancient graphic alphabets, grouping the letters or syllables.

9th Series. — Syllabic letters, expressing syllables, not simple sounds, and disposed in rows. Such is the late syllabic alphabet of the Cherokees, and many graphic inscriptions found in North and South America. Similar to the syllabic alphabets of Asia, Africa, and Polynesia.

10*th Series.*—Alphabets, or graphic letters, expressing simple sounds, and disposed in rows. Found in many inscriptions, medals, and coins in North and South America, and lately introduced everywhere by the European colonists; similar to the alphabets of Asia, Africa, and Europe.

11*th Series.*—Abbreviations, or letters standing for whole words, or part of a glyph and graphic delineation, standing and expressing the whole; used by almost all the writing nations of North and South America, as well as Asia, Europe, and Africa.

12*th Series.*—Numeric system of graphic signs, to express numbers. All the various kinds of signs, such as dots, lines, strokes, circles, glyphs, letters, &c., used by some nations of North and South America, as well as in the eastern continent.

Some years ago, the Society of Geography, of Paris, offered a large premium for a voyage to Guatemala, and a new survey of the antiquities of Yucatan and Chiapa, chiefly those fifteen miles from Palenque, which are wrongly called by that name. I have restored to them the true name of Otolum, which is yet the name of the stream running through the ruins. I should have been inclined to undertake this voyage and exploration myself, if the civil discords of the country did not forbid it. My attention was drawn forcibly to this subject as soon as the account of those ruins, surveyed by Captain Del Rio as early as 1787, but withheld from the public eye by Spain, was published in 1822, in English.

This account, which partly describes the ruins of a stone city seventy-five miles in circuit (length thirty-two English miles, greatest breadth twelve miles), full of palaces, monuments, statues, and inscriptions—one of the earliest seats of American civilization, about equal to Thebes of Egypt—was well calculated to inspire me with hopes that they would throw a great light over American history, when more properly examined.

I have been disappointed in finding that no traveller has dared to penetrate again to that recondite place, and illustrate all the ruins and monuments, with the languages yet spoken all around. The Society of Geography has received many additional accounts, derived from documents preserved in Mexico; but they have not

been deemed worthy of the reward offered for a new survey, and have not even been published. The same has happened with Tiahuanaco, in Bolivia, in South America, another mass of ancient ruins, and a mine of historical knowledge, which no late traveller has visited or described.

Being, therefore, without hope of any speedy accession to our knowledge of those places, I have been compelled to work upon the materials now extant, which have happily enabled me to do a great deal, notwithstanding all their defects, and throw some light on that part of the history of America.

PHILADELPHIA, *January*, 1832.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF MEXICO.

FROM Clavigero, Storia del Messico — from Solis, Boturini, Herrera, Bernal Dias, and other authors, we learn the state of the arts in Mexico prior to the invasion of the Spaniards; the progress made by that people in science; the form of their government, and of their hierarchy: and from the simple and unaffected narrative of Cortez, contained in his letters to Charles the Fifth, we may gather pretty accurate knowledge of their resources, and of the number and character of the population.

Some idea may be formed of the civilization of a people, by the nature of their government, their civil institutions, and the laws by which they are governed. In Mexico, the monarch was elected from among the m....bers of the reigning family, by six electors, chosen from among the thirty princes of the first rank. The political system was feudal. The first class of nobles, consisting of thirty families, had each one hundred thousand vassals. There were more than three thousand families in the second class. The vassals were serfs attached to the soil, over whom the lord exercised the right of life and death. All the lands were divided into allodial, hereditary, and contingent estates — the latter depending upon places in the gift of the crown.

The priests were charged with the education of the youth; and

on their testimony of the merit of their scholars, depended their future rank. Each province was subject to a tribute, except certain nobles who were compelled to take the field, in case of a war, with a stated number of followers. The tribute was paid in kind, and was fixed at one thirtieth part of the crop. Besides which, the governors of provinces vied with each other in the magnificence of the presents which they sent to the emperor.

In the quarto edition of Lorenzano, there are plates of the figures, by means of which the receivers and administrators kept an account of the tribute due by each province.

There was an *Octroi* upon provisions, levied in every city. Posts were established between the capital and the remotest provinces of the empire.

Sacrilege, treason, and murder, were punished with death; and Cortez protests that the Mexicans respected the laws of the empire fully as much as the Spaniards did those of Spain.

The emperor was served with great magnificence and Asiatic pomp.

The attention of the government was principally directed toward the internal commerce, so as to secure an abundant supply to the people.

A court of ten magistrates determined the validity of contracts; and officers were constantly employed to examine the measures and the quality of the goods exposed for sale.

Under Montezuma, the government was despotic, and, in his turn, he was governed by the high-priest. It will be recollected that at the last siege of the capital, when the emperor and his council had resolved to accept any terms rather than prolong a hopeless contest, the high-priest opposed them and broke off the treaty.

Besides the empire of the Mexicans, there were other powerful states, whose form of government was republican; and Cortez compared them to the republics of Pisa, Venice, and Genoa.

I must refer the reader to Clavigero and Lorenzano, for the history of Tlascala, the most powerful of those states, the government of which existed some time after the conquest of Mexico.

Tlascala was a thickly-settled, fertile, and populous country, divided into several districts, under the authority of a chief. These chiefs administered justice, levied the tribute, and commanded the military forces; but their decrees were not valid, or of force, until confirmed by the senate of Tlascala, which was the true sovereign.

A certain number of citizens, chosen from the different districts by popular assemblies, formed this legislative body. The senate elected its own chief. The laws were strictly and impartially executed; and Cortez represents this people as numerous, wealthy, and warlike.

The Mexicans possessed some knowledge of astronomy, and their calendar was constructed with more exactness than that of the Greeks, the Romans, or the Egyptians. Their hieroglyphic drawings and maps — their cities and artificial roads, causeways, canals, and immense pyramids — their government and hierarchy, and administration of laws — their knowledge of the art of mining, and of preparing metals for armament and use — their skill in carving images out of the hardest stone — in manufacturing and dyeing cloths, and the perfection of their agriculture, inspire us with a high opinion of the civilization of the Mexicans at the time of the conquest: especially when we take into consideration the period when they are described to have reached this state of excellence in the arts and sciences. We ought always to bear in mind the state of Europe at the same period, before the Reformation, and before the discovery of the art of printing. Cortez compares Mexico with Spain, and frequently to the advantage of the former. The only circumstance wanting to have rendered their state of society more perfect than that of Spain, appears to have been a more pure religion, and the use of animals for domestic purposes.

The peasants were compelled to carry heavy loads, like beasts of burden; and in their religious worship the most shocking superstition prevailed. Their altars were frequently stained with the blood of human sacrifices.

We cannot judge of the character of the population, prior to the conquest, by the Indians we now see. The priests, who pos-

sessed all the learning, were destroyed; the princes and nobles were deprived of their property, and in fact reduced to a level with the lowest class; and the serfs, who are, and always have been an oppressed and degraded people, are alone to represent the former Mexicans.

Humboldt says, that "it is difficult to appreciate, justly, the moral character of the native Mexicans, if we consider this caste, which has so long suffered under a barbarous tyranny, only in its present state of degradation. At the commencement of the Spanish conquest, the wealthy Indians, for the most part, perished, victims of the ferocity of the Europeans. Christian fanaticism persecuted the Aztec priests; they exterminated the Teopixqui, or ministers of the Divinity, all who inhabited the teocalli, or temples, and who could be regarded as depositaries of historical, mythological, and astronomical knowledge. The monks burnt the hieroglyphic paintings, by which knowledge of every sort was transmitted from generation to generation. Deprived of these means of instruction, the people relapsed into a state of ignorance so much the more profound, that the missionaries, little skilled in the Mexican languages, substituted few new ideas for the ancient. The Indian women, who preserved some fortune, preferred allying themselves with the conquerors, to partaking the contempt entertained for the Indians. There remained, therefore, of the natives, none but the most indigent, the poor cultivators, mechanics, porters, who were used as beasts of burden — and, above all, the dregs of the people, that crowd of beggars, which marked the imperfection of the social institutions and the feudal yoke, and who, even in the time of Cortez, filled the streets of the great cities of Mexico. How, then, shall we judge from these miserable remains of a powerful people, either of the degree of civilization to which it had reached, from the twelfth to the sixteenth century, or of the intellectual development of which it is susceptible?"

Shortly after Cortez landed his small army at Vera Cruz, he received messengers from Montezuma, bringing with them presents to a considerable amount, and entreating the Spanish commander not to march further into the country. The sight of this

display of wealth stimulated the cupidity of the Spaniards, and confirmed Cortez in his determination to penetrate to the capital. In his route he had to contend against the republic of Tlascala, a nation continually involved in war with the empire of Mexico. Cortez vanquished the republicans in two battles, and, after compelling them to make peace, he found no difficulty in enlisting them against Montezuma. Six thousand Tlascalans were added to his European troops as auxiliaries, and he continued his march upon the capital of the empire in the guise of friendship. As he advanced, he continued to augment his forces by treaties with other nations or tribes, which were inimical to Montezuma; and with a European force of five hundred infantry and fifteen horsemen, and a large army of Indians, he reached the city of Tenochtitlan on the 8th of November, 1519. The emperor received him with a degree of magnificence that excited the astonishment of the Spaniards. The whole army was lodged and entertained sumptuously, and Cortez himself received presents to a great amount. Some of these he enumerates to Charles the Fifth, in order to give him an idea of the riches and ingenuity of this extraordinary people.

It is not surprising, that at the sight of so much wealth, Cortez should form the wish to become possessed of it. He soon acquired an ascendency over the timid Mexicans, and Montezuma found that in admitting an armed and powerful friend into the heart of his capital, he had delivered himself and his people into the hands of a ferocious enemy.

The Mexican general, Qualpopoca, who had committed some hostilities upon the colony left by the Spaniards at Vera Cruz, was, on the demand of Cortez, delivered up to him, bound hand and foot, and by his order was burnt alive. Soon after this barbarous act, he contrived to get possession of the person of Montezuma, and detained him prisoner. But what, perhaps, irritated the people more even than this violation of the person of the emperor, was the contempt with which their religious rites and idols were treated by the Spaniards.

The arrival of Narvaez on the coast, with a large force, despatched by Velasco to deprive Cortez of the command, compelled

the latter to leave Alvarado in command of the force at Tenochtitlan, and to march against this unexpected enemy. His departure from the capital was the signal for the people to manifest the hostile feeling they had long indulged toward the Spaniards. They took up arms against them, burnt the vessels which Cortez had constructed to command the lake, and laid siege to the building in which the Spaniards were lodged.

At this period Cortez returned, after having surprised and vanquished Narvaez. By this action he acquired a great accession of force; and he is said to have had, after his arrival at the capital, one thousand infantry and one hundred horse. The siege was prosecuted with vigor and determination on the part of the natives, and the place defended with equal obstinacy and valor on the part of the Spaniards. Montezuma, who had ascended the terrace to address his subjects and to quell the insurrection, was killed by a stone or arrow, and his brother Quetlavaca proclaimed his successor. This gave renewed vigor to the Mexicans, and Cortez was compelled to retreat. His own account of his flight, in one of his letters, is well worth reading. The night of this disastrous retreat was called *La Noche triste*, the melancholy night.

Cortez continued to retreat upon Tlascala, the Mexicans pursuing and harassing his rear. At Otumba, he was obliged to turn and give them battle. He describes his own troops as worn out with fatigue, but says that the enemy were so numerous that they could neither fight nor fly; and that the slaughter continued the whole day, until one of their principal chiefs was killed, which put an end to the battle and to the war. He reached Tlascala without further trouble, with the remnant of his forces, and was well received by his old allies.

He was urged by his officers, and by the garrison of Vera Cruz, to retire to the coast, but refused to abandon the conquest of Mexico; and, in order to maintain the ascendency he had acquired over the people of Tlascala, he made incursions into the territories of the neighboring nations, whence he always returned victorious, and loaded with spoil.

In December, 1521, he again marched upon Tenochtitlan, and

took up his quarters in Tezcuco. From this place he carried on the war against the Mexicans and their allies, until the arrival of the frames of thirteen small vessels, which he had ordered to be constructed in Tlascala. They were brought by such a multitude of Indians, Cortez says, that "from the time the first began to enter the city until the last finished, more than six hours elapsed." In order to launch these brigantines, as he calls them, a canal of half a mile in length was cut from the lake, of such ample dimensions, that eight thousand Indians worked every day at it, for fifty days, before it was completed.

On reviewing his troops, after the vessels were on the lake, he found that he had eighty-six horsemen, one hundred and eighteen fusiliers, and upward of seven hundred infantry, armed with swords and bucklers, three large iron field-pieces, and fifteen small ones of bronze, with ten quintals of powder. He does not give the number of Indians then with him, but on the following day he despatched messengers to Tlascala and other provinces, to inform these people that he was ready to proceed against Tenochtitlan. In consequence of this advice, the captains of Tlascala arrived with their forces, well appointed and well armed; and, according to their report, they amounted to upward of fifty thousand.

He divided his forces into three corps: one, consisting of thirty horsemen, eighteen fusiliers, and one hundred and fifty infantry, armed with sword and buckler, and twenty-five thousand Tlascalans, was commanded by Pedro de Alvarado, and was to occupy Tacuba. Another, commanded by Christoval Olid, consisted of thirty-three horsemen, eighteen fusiliers, and one hundred and seventy infantry, armed with sword and buckler, together with upward of twenty thousand Indians, was to take possession of Cuyoacan. The third division was intrusted to Gonzalo de Sandoval; it amounted to twenty-four horsemen, fifteen fusiliers, and one hundred and fifty infantry, armed with sword and buckler, with thirty thousand Indians. This division was to march upon Iztapalapan, destroy that town, and then, under cover of the vessels, form a junction with that of Olid. Cortez himself commanded the fleet. As soon as they reached their several destina-

tions, Alvarado and Olid destroyed the aqueducts, and cut off the supply of water from the city.

After a siege of seventy-five days, during which both parties displayed the most obstinate courage, the besieged, reduced to the last extremity by disease and famine, made an attempt to evacuate the city by water. They were pursued by the light squadron of the Spaniards; and the canoe which carried the person of the emperor was captured by Garcia Holguin. This capture put an end to the war. When Gautimotzin, who had succeeded to the throne on the death of his uncle, was brought before Cortez, on the terrace where he was standing, and which overlooked the lake —he advanced, says Cortez, toward me, and said that he had done everything which his duty required, to defend himself and his subjects, until he was reduced to this state, and that I might now do with him what I thought proper; and put his hand on a dagger that I wore, telling me to stab him.

The siege was commenced on the 30th of May, 1521, and terminated on the 13th of August; and Cortez says, that during these seventy-five days, not one passed without some combat between the besieged and the Spaniards

The captured Mexicans were divided among the conquerors; and Cortez informs the emperor that he had preserved his share of the gold and silver, and his fifth of the *slaves*, and other things, which by right belonged to his Majesty — and as slaves they continued to be treated for centuries, notwithstanding the humane laws passed in Spain for their relief.

It would be tedious and unprofitable to trace the colonial history of Mexico from the conquest to the revolution. From great natural advantages, this country has become rich and powerful, in spite of a most impolitic colonial system. In justice to the government of Spain, it must be acknowledged that the laws of the Indies were wise and just, and the regulations relating to the poor Indians framed in the very spirit of humanity; but their administration was bad, and the Creoles were oppressed by their European masters — and, in their turn, harassed and oppressed the unfortunate natives. Almost the only bright spot in the page of this history, is the period of the administration of the viceroy Revilla-

gigedo. Good roads, leading from the capital to different parts of the kingdom, were laid out and constructed by his orders; and the streets of the principal cities were paved and lighted, and a good police established. The only authentic statistical account of this country was made out at this period; and almost every salutary law or regulation now in existence may be traced to the administration of Revillagigedo.

The immediate causes of the revolution of the Spanish colonies are too generally known to require any further explanation. The invasion of Spain by Napoleon only accelerated a revolution, toward which the Americans were slowly but irresistibly impelled by the conduct of the mother country, and by the political events of the age. — [POINSETT.]

THE END.

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